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THE
HISTORY
OF
ANCIENT GREECE,
ITS COLONIES, AND CONQUESTS;

FROM THE EARLIEST ACCOUNTS TILL THE DIVISION OF THE MACEDONIAN
EMPIRE IN THE EAST.

INCLUDING THE HISTORY OF
LITERATURE, PHILOSOPHY, AND THE FINE ARTS.

BY JOHN GILLIES, LL. D.

*F. R. S. and A. S. London, F. R. S. Edinburgh, and Historiographer to his
Majesty for Scotland.*

Εκ μὲν τοιγὰ τῆς ἀπαντῶν πρὸς ἀλλήλα συμπλοκῆς καὶ παραθεσίως, εἰ δὲ
ὁμοιοτήτος καὶ διαφορᾶς, μόνως ἂν τις ἐφίκοιτο καὶ δυνήθει κατεπίτευσαι,
ἀμὰ καὶ τὸ χρησίμον καὶ τὸ τέρπνον ἐκ τῆς ἰστορίας λαβεῖν.

POLYBIUS, l. i. c. v.

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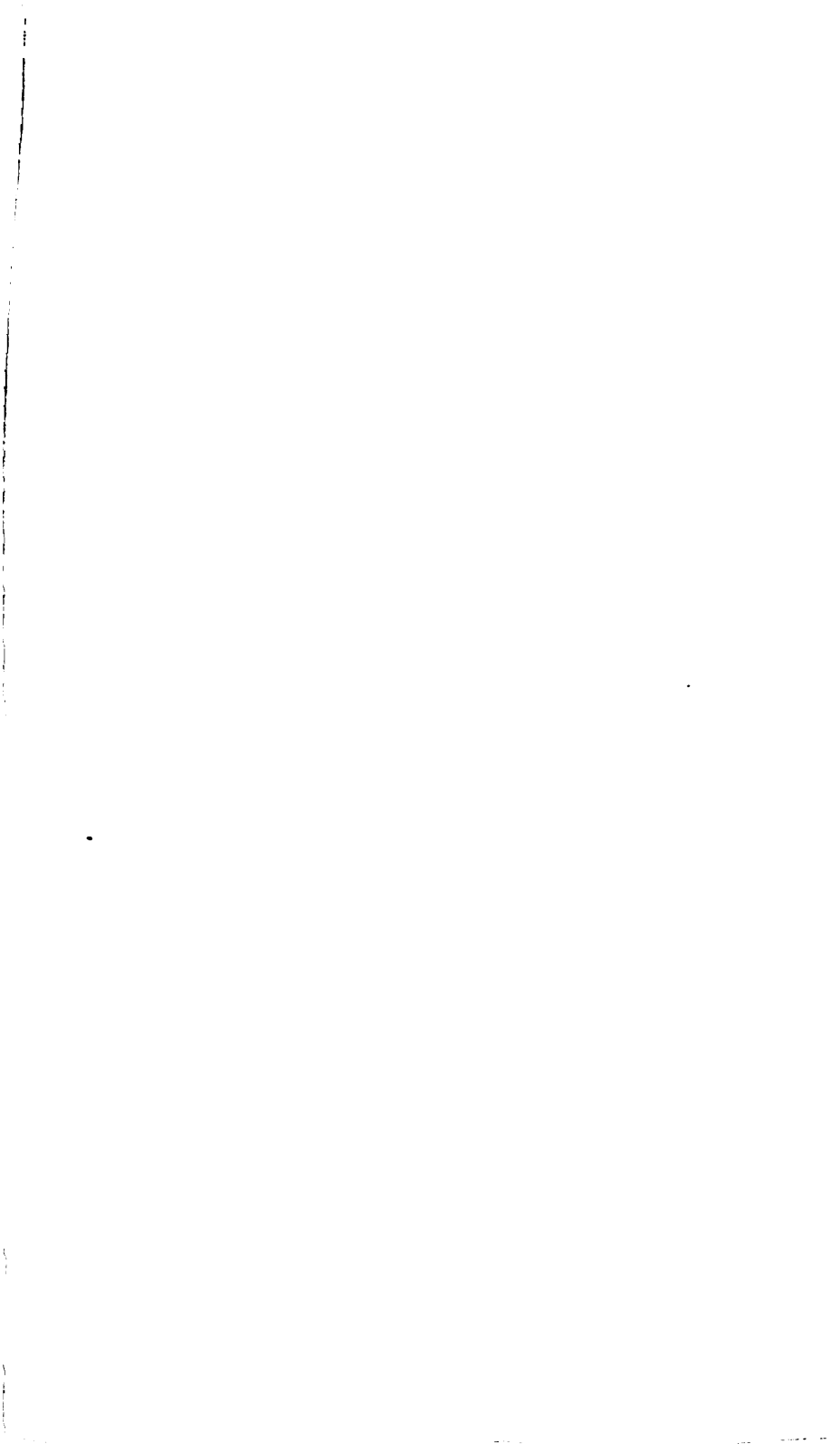
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THE
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ANCIENT GREECE.

CHAP. XI.

Military Glory of Greece.—Enemies to whom that Country was exposed.—Foundation and Growth of Carthage.—The flourishing Condition of Magna Græcia.—Excites the Jealousy of the Carthaginians.—Who enter into a League with Xerxes.—The Object of this Alliance.—Causes of the singular Prosperity of Magna Græcia.—History of Pythagoras, and of his Philosophy.—The Carthaginians invade Sicily.—Their Disasters.—Glory of Gelon.—His Treaty with the Carthaginians.—Causes of the Decay of Magna Græcia.

THE beginning of the fifth century before Christ forms the most glorious æra in the history of Greece. While the republics of Athens and Sparta humbled the pride of Asia, the flourishing settlements on the Hellespont and the Hadriatic overawed the fierce Barbarians of Europe;* and the southern colony of

State of
Greece.
Olymp.
lxxv. 1.
A. C. 480.

* Herodot. l. vi. Thucyd. l. i.

Cyrené restrained, within their native limits, the savage ferocity of the Lybians.* The north, south, and east thus acknowledging the ascendant of the Grecian valour and genius, Rome still contended in the west, with the obstinacy of the Volsci,† for the rude villages of Latium: yet on this side, from which the stream of conquest was destined, in a future age, to flow over the world, the Greeks had already most danger to apprehend, and most laurels to acquire; not however from Rome, but from the implacable‡ enemy of the Roman name.

The foundation and growth of Carthage,

The foundation and growth of Carthage, which have been so successfully adorned by poetical fiction, are very imperfectly explained in history. It is known, that at least eight hundred and ninety years|| before the Christian æra, a Phœnician colony settled on that fertile projecture of the African coast, which boldly advances into the Mediterranean, to meet, as it were, and to defy the shores of Sicily and Italy, planted in the following century by Greeks, with whom the republic of Carthage, long before the age of her great Hannibal, waged many cruel and bloody wars. For three centuries after their establishment, the Carthaginians seem to have silently, but successfully, availed themselves of the natural fertility of their soil, the conveniency of their harbours, the skill and dexterity of their artisans, the adventurous spirit of their mariners; above all, of the profound wisdom of their government, which had been established on such admirable principles, that from the foun-

* Strabo, lxxvii.

† Diodor. l. xi.

‡ With what energy does Virgil express the eternal enmity between Rome and Carthage!

Littora littoribus contraria, fluctibus undas,

Imprecor, arma armis; pugnent ipsique nepotes. *ÆNEID.* l. iv.

|| B. C. 891. Petav. de Doctr. Temporum. Yet, as there is a gap in the Carthaginian history of several centuries, every man of taste will be desirous of extending the duration of this dark and unknown period, to have the pleasure of believing that Æneas and Dido were contemporaries: an opinion more probable than that of Sir Isaac Newton, who would bring down the time of Æneas and the æra of the Trojan war to the age of Dido and the foundation of Carthage.

dition of their city till the age of the philosopher Aristotle,* no tyrant had oppressed the freedom, no sedition had disturbed the tranquillity of Carthage.†

From this peaceful and happy obscurity the Carthaginians first emerged into notice in consequence of their opposition to the naval enterprises of the Asiatic Greeks, who, about the middle of the sixth century before Christ, flying the oppressive domination of Persia, threw themselves on the western shores and islands of the Mediterranean. As a maritime and enterprising nation the Greeks were naturally rivals to the Carthaginians; and the Phocæans, who had left the coast of Ionia to avoid the cruel tyranny of the satrap Harpagus, had landed at, or perhaps founded, Aleria in the isle of Corsica, before they finally settled at Velia‡ in Italy, and Marseilles in Gaul.¶ The Carthaginians, who had already formed establishments in Corsica, regarded the whole island as a dependency of their republic, and set themselves to oppose with vigour the Grecian invaders. Their commercial allies,§ the Tuscans, reinforced their fleet; and the most ancient naval engagement, distinctly recorded in history, was fought in the Sardinian sea, between the Phocæans with sixty sail on the one side, against the Tuscans and Carthaginians with double that number on the other.¶¶ The Greeks had the whole glory of the battle; they destroyed forty of the enemy's ships, and compelled the rest to fly. But the smallness of their numbers, greatly diminished by their desperate efforts in defending the honour of their nation against a

which opposes the naval enterprises of the Greeks.

Hinders them from

* Aristot. de Repub. l. ii. c. xi.

† If Dido laid the foundation of so much prosperity and happiness, she might boast, with becoming dignity, of having secured immortal fame:

Vixi, & quem dederat cursum fortuna peregi,

Urbe[m] præclaram statui, mea mœnia vidi:

Et nunc magna mei sub terris ibit imago.

VIRGIL, *ibid.*

‡ Diodor. l. v. and Cluverius Sicil. Ant. p. 507.

¶ Thucyd. l. i.

§ Aristot. Politic. l. iii.

¶¶ Id. *ibid.* & Herodot. l. vi.

settling in
Corsica.

superior force, obliged them to abandon the project of settling in Corsica.

Power and
splendour
of Car-
thage.
Olymp.
lxx. i.
A. C. 500.

Though the issue of this memorable sea-fight tends to dispel the cloud of fiction concerning the remote voyages and ancient naval power of the Carthaginians, yet it cannot be doubted, that in the beginning of the following century, and before the invasion of Xerxes, they were the most power-

ful commercial nation in the world. The proud centre of their empire was surrounded by a cluster of colonies and tributary cities, which extended above a thousand miles* along the coast of Africa. They were masters of Sardinia and the northern coast of Sicily.† They had established colonies not only in Corsica, but in Malta and the Balearian isles. They often visited the Casseterides.‡ They probably first discovered the Canaries, whose equable and happy temperature entitled them to the epithet of Fortunate. They had appropriated the gold mines of Spain, the Peru and Mexico of the ancient world;§ and all these advantages being directed by the prudent enterprise of the magistrates, consisting chiefly of merchants,§ and improved by the patient industry of the people,

* From the western boundary of Cyrenaica to the Straits of Gibraltar, Shaw reckons 1420 geographical miles; but this was the extent of the Carthaginian dominion in the greatest splendour of the republic. Shaw's Travels, p. 150.

† Polyb. l. iii. c. xxii.

‡ Plin. Nat. Hist. l. vi. c. 37.

§ Auctor. apud Hendreich Respub. Carthag. l. i.

§ In this respect the government of Carthage was very different from that of Crete, and particularly of Sparta, with both which Aristotle compares it. Isocrates (ad Nicociem) says, that in civil affairs the Carthaginian government was aristocratical; in military, royal: this probably was the case in the earliest times. The chief magistrates were called Suffetes, which, in the Hebrew language, signifies judges (Bochart, Cannan,) and might therefore be naturally translated by the word βασιλεῖς, in Greek. But it appears from Aristotle, that these judges or kings, two in number, were nothing more than annual magistrates, who convoked the senate, and presided in that assembly. When the senate and the suffetes were of one mind, the people had no vote in the management of public affairs; but when their opinions differed, it

who knew that by gaining wealth they must attain respect, rendered Carthage the centre of general commerce. From Egypt they imported linen and the papyrus; the coasts of the Red Sea furnished them with spices, perfumes, gold, pearls, and precious stones.* The rich carpets of Persia adorned the palaces of the Carthaginian magistrates. From Spain they drew the precious metals necessary to facilitate their commerce; and from Britain and other provinces of the north, they derived iron, lead, tin, and copper, equally necessary to second all the efforts of their industry. The Carthaginian exports consisted partly in the produce of their fertile soil, but chiefly in the ingenious labours of their artificers; grains, fruits, honey, leather, and flax of a superior kind;† naval stores, particularly ropes made of a species of broom called spartum; household furniture, toys, and the materials of the highly valued *Punican* colour. Their mechanic arts had attained a degree of perfection which was acknowledged and admired by their enemies;‡ but the liberal arts, and particularly poetry and eloquence,|| seem never to have flourished or

belonged to the people to decide. Aristotle regards this as an imperfection in their constitution; and time justified his opinion. In a commercial republic, where the people gradually become more rich and more licentious, such a regulation naturally tended to throw too much power into their hands. During the century which elapsed from Aristotle to Hannibal, the people of Carthage became more powerful than the senate; at Rome the senate continued more powerful than the people; and to these circumstances chiefly, the most judicious author of antiquity ascribes the very different fortune of the two nations in the ever memorable wars between them. POLYB. l. vi.

* Pliny, lxxxviii. c. 7. tells us that carbuncles were so common in Carthage, that they were generally distinguished by the epithet, Carthaginian.

† Xenophon, de Venatione.

‡ Cato de Re Rustica, & Valerius Maximus, l. vii.

|| The great Hannibal was a lover of Greek learning, and composed several books in that language. Cornelius Nepos in Hannibal. Silenus, another Carthaginian, wrote history in Greek. Cicer. de Divinat. Sallust speaks of *Punic books* in his history of the Jugurthine war; and we know that Mago's Treatise of Rural Economy in 28 books, was translated by order of the Roman senate, although the elder Cato had previously treated that important subject. I mention not the doubtful voyage of Hanno, (See Dodwell, Dissert. in Hannon. Perip. Montesq. Esprit. des Loix. l. xxi. c. 8. & Bougain-

taken root in their republic; a circumstance more fatal to the renown of Carthage than all the destructive ravages of the Romans, whose immortal hate would have found it more difficult to abolish the elegant productions of genius, than to extinguish the most splendid monuments of wealth and grandeur.

The ambitious & jealous spirit of that republic.

Few individuals are able to enjoy, without abusing, the gifts of fortune; and no nation ever possessed power, without aspiring at conquest. But the commercial ambition of the Carthaginians was

degraded by an exclusive and jealous spirit, which sought to stifle the activity and improvements of every people that might ever become their rival.* In the end of the sixth century before Christ, and twenty-eight years before the invasion of Xerxes, they concluded a treaty with Rome, recently delivered from the tyranny of its kings, which marks the utmost solicitude to prevent the new republic from ever entering into correspondence, or ever gaining acquaintance,† with the dependencies of Carthage. The Greek colonies in Italy and Sicily, which, within the course of sixty years, had (for reasons that will immediately be explained) received such accessions of strength and splendour as entitled those countries to the appellation of Magna Græcia,‡ more justly alarmed the jealousy, and provoked the envious resentment of the Carthaginian magistrates. The Greeks were already masters of the eastern isles and shores of the Mediterranean. They were not only a warlike, but an ingenious and commercial nation. The naval force of the Phocæans alone had

The prosperity of Greece alarms the Carthaginians.

ville, *Mem. de l'Acad. t. xxvi.*) since better proofs of the Carthaginian literature may be found in the second and eighteenth books of Pliny. But two observations naturally present themselves, which justify what is said in the text; first, that the Carthaginians wrote rather on the useful than ornamental arts; and secondly, that their greatest writers preferred the Greek to the Punic language.

* Strabo, l. iii. p. 265. & l. xviii. p. 1154.

† Polyb. l. iii. c. xxii.

‡ Strabo, l. viii. p. 389.

defied and disgraced the united fleets of the Tuscans and Carthaginians. The latter therefore beheld, with the utmost satisfaction, the continual sparks of hostility that flashed between the Greeks and Persians. They learned, with admiration and delight, the mighty preparations of Xerxes; but were still more delighted when the Great King, who had been accustomed to receive the presents and the adulation of the tributary princes of Asia, condescended to demand an equal alliance with their republic; probably granted them subsidies to raise troops in Spain, Gaul, and the northern parts of Italy; and only required them to join their efforts with his own, to punish, and, if possible, to extirpate the natural enemies of both. The crafty Africans greedily accepted propositions, seemingly so favourable to their interest; and, after three years' preparations, had collected an armament of two thousand ships of war, and three thousand transports, to convey an army of three hundred thousand men into Magna Græcia.* It was determined between the confederates, that while Xerxes poured his millions into the centre of Greece and rooted out the original stock of the devoted nation, the Carthaginians should cut off its flourishing branches in Italy and Sicily. The terms of the agreement were carefully observed; the combined attack was made at the time appointed; and Europe is interested in knowing to what particular causes must be ascribed the failure of expeditions, which, if successful, would have inverted her destiny, intercepted that boasted superiority which she thenceforth maintained over the other quarters of the world.

The Carthaginians enter into an alliance with Xerxes.

Their views in adopting this measure.

Whoever has observed the desolate barbarity of Calabria, or reflected on the narrow extent and present weakness of Sicily, cannot hear, without a mixture of surprise and incredulity, that five centuries before Christ, those countries contained above twenty warlike communities, several of whom could

The flourishing condition of Magna Græcia.

* Herodot. l. vii. & Diodor. xi.

send into the field an hundred thousand fighting men. The hasty glance of impatient ignorance will confidently reject, on this subject, the evidence of antiquity, as contrary to probability and experience; the contemplative visionary will admit the fact, and deduce from it many gloomy reflections on the old age and decay of the world; but the more practical philosopher will attempt to discover the causes of the ancient and actual state of Magna Græcia, in the history and institutions of that country during the respective periods of time which are the objects of his research.

History of
the coloni-
zation of
that coun-
try.

The establishment of Eubœan Cumæ, the mother of Parthenopé, or Naples, and the foundation of a few other Grecian cities in Italy and Sicily, remounts, as already mentioned, to the heroic ages; but by far the greater number of Greek colonies

in those parts were planted during the eighth century before the Christian æra,* and chiefly, 1. by the Eubœans, whose principal city, Chalcis, usually furnishing the conductor of the colony, gave the epithet of Chalcidian to the new settlement; 2. by the Achæans of Peloponnesus, who were of the Eolian tongue and lineage; and 3. by the Dorian states of that peninsula, especially Corinth; to which city may be applied the observation of ancient republicans concerning the fathers of Cato and Brutus, that as children often derived lustre from the merit of their parents, so Corinth acquired renown from the splendour and prosperity of its children. Besides their powerful colonies

The Dorian
colonies
most pow-
erful in Si-
cily.
Olymp.
xi. 2.
A. C. 729.

in Corcyra, Leucas, Anactorium, Ambracia, whose transactions form such an important part of the history of ancient Greece, the Corinthians founded Syracuse, which soon became and long continued, the capital of Sicily. Seventy years after their establishment there, the inhabitants of

Syracuse built Acras, and afterwards, at an equal distance of time, Camerina. Many other cities of less note owed existence to the same metropolis; so that in the sixth century

* Between the 10th and 30th Olympiads and the years 777 and 737 B. C.

before Christ, the Syracusans had extended their settlements over all the southern coast of the island.* We had already an opportunity to mention on what occasion the Lacedæmonians founded the city of Tarentum in Italy; thirty-nine years afterwards Rhegium was built by the Messenians and Chalcidians, the former of whom (as we have related above) had already settled at Messenê, on the opposite shore of Sicily. The citizens of Tarentum founded Heraclea, situate on the Tarentine gulf, and perhaps gave an accession of inhabitants to Locri, which though originally planted by the Eolians, seems early to have used the Doric dialect. The Rhodians, who were also of the Doric race, built the city of Gela in Sicily, forty-five years after the foundation of Syracuse;† and Gela planted the flourishing colony of Agrigentum, which soon surpassed the splendour of its metropolis, and became the second city in the island.

By means of these powerful establishments, the Dorians acquired, and always maintained, an ascendant in Sicily; but the Achæan colonies, who were of the Eolian blood and language,‡ commanded the Italian shore. Crotona, the most considerable city of the Achæans, and of all Italy, in ancient times, was built seven hundred and ten years before Christ.¶ Sybaris, its rival, was founded about the same time, and by the same nation. The former sent colonies to Tirana, Caulonia, and Pandosia; the latter built Laus, Metaphontum, and Posidonia, or Pæstum,§ whose admired ruins attest the ancient wealth and grandeur of the Greek cities of Italy.

In this deduction, had we followed the order of time, we ought to have mentioned first of all, the Ionian colonies, who came from the isle of Eubœa. The inhabitants of that island built Naxos in

Olymp.
viii. 2.
A. C. 707.

The Eolian,
in Italy.

The Ionian
the weakest
in both
countries.

* Scymnus, v. 293. Thucyd. i. vi. & Herodot. i. vii.

† Thucyd. i. vi.

‡ Strabo, i. viii. p. 513. assures us of the latter circumstance, which is of more importance than the uncertain genealogy of the ancient Grecian tribes.

¶ Dionys. Halicarn. i. ii.

§ Scymnus, v. 245.

Sicily, a year before the foundation of Syracuse;* but neither that nor their settlements at Catana, Segesta, Leontium, ever attained considerable populousness or splendour. And it deserves to be particularly remarked, that, for reasons which will appear in the sequel of this work, the Ionians, who settled chiefly upon the eastern shore of Sicily, never rivalled the power and fame of their Dorian and Eolian neighbours, but fell short of those nations in Magna Græcia, as much as they surpassed them on the shores and islands of Asia.

General causes of the wealth and populousness of all these colonies. Olymp. lxx. i. A. C. 500.

Instead of fatiguing the memory of our readers with the names of less considerable states or cities, which had little influence on the general affairs of the whole country,† it is of more importance to examine the circumstances to which the inhabitants of Magna Græcia owed their flourishing situation at the period of time of which we write, when (it may be boldly affirmed) these colonies equalled, and surpassed, the wealth and power of the mother country. We shall not insist on the well-known physical and moral causes which usually contribute to the rapid growth of newly-established colonies. It is evident, that amidst the equality of fortune, and simplicity of manners, which commonly prevail in such communities, men who have a wide country before them must naturally multiply far beyond the proportion of nations corrupted and weakened by the vices of wealth, luxury, and above all, of vanity, which perhaps is the greatest enemy to the increase of the human species. It is sufficient barely to mention the natural fertility of Magna Græcia, and

* Thucyd. l. i. vi.

† The Magna Græcia, which I always use in the sense of Strabo, cited above, to denote the Greek settlements in Sicily as well as Italy, being the most accessible part of the Grecian dominions, has been more fully described by the moderns than any other. The immense collection of the *Thesaurus Siculus*, and particularly vols. i. iv. vii. viii. and xiii. afford useful materials, as well as *Cluverii Sicil. Antiqua*, and *Fazellus de Rebus Siculis*, and the excellent work of Gio. Batt. Caruso, *Memorie istoriche di quanto è accaduto in Sicilia dal tempo de' suoi primi abitanti fino ai Normanni*.

particularly of Sicily, which, in the language of antiquity, restored an hundred fold.* The Greeks who sailed thither from Peloponnesus, carried with them the knowledge and practice of agriculture, which had early attained an high degree of perfection in their peninsula; and the exuberant soil of Sicily, improved by cultivation, soon exhibited a picture of that rich abundance, which in later times, made that beautiful island be entitled the granary of Rome.†

The peculiar situation of the Achæans and Dorians, from whom chiefly, the colonies in Magna Græcia derived their origin, had a considerable influence in accelerating the population and grandeur of these new establishments. The Achæans, whose republic became so famous in later times, and that through circumstances and causes which it is necessary at present to explain, originally inhabited a long but narrow strip of ground, not more fertile than extensive, along the Corinthian gulf, whose rocky shores were destitute of good harbours.‡ But the impartial and generous spirit of the Achæan laws early compensated the natural defects of their territory. They were the first and long the only republic of Greece, who admitted strangers into their community on equal terms with the ancient citizens.¶ In *their* truly free country, no powerful capital, like Thebes in Bœotia, or Athens in Attica, domineered over the inferior towns and villages. Twelve cities, which had common laws and institutions, and afterwards common weights and measures,§ sent deputies to Helicé, which is distinguished by Homer¶ as the most considerable town of Achaia. That place being destroyed by an earthquake** three hundred and seventy-three years before Christ, Ægæ became

Particular
causes.
The Achæan
laws.

* Strabo, l. viii.

† Diodorus, l. xvi.

‡ Plutarch, in Arato, p. 1031.

¶ Polybius, l. ii. p. 178.

§ Polybius, *ibid.* mentions this circumstance, to show how desirous they were to have every thing common and equal among them.

¶ Il. ii. in the catalogue.

** Strabo, l. viii. p. 589. says, the earthquake happened two years before the battle of Leuctra, which was fought 371 years before Christ.

the seat of the general congress, which regulated public affairs, and appointed annual magistrates and generals to execute their resolutions, who were responsible to the congress, or council, as the members of the council themselves were accountable to the cities by which they had been named and constituted.* This excellent system of government, which checked the ambition, while it maintained the independence of Achaia,† defended that fortunate country against the convulsions which shook and overwhelmed the most powerful republics of Greece. It was then that the Achæans, who during A. C. 282. many ages had enjoyed their equitable laws in silence, emerged from obscurity, and communicating their government on equal terms to the neighbouring cities of Peloponnesus, preserved the feeble spark of liberty, every where extinguished around them, for one hundred and thirty-six years, till they finally yielded to the power and A. C. 146. policy of Rome.‡ This short period of war and tumult has been minutely described in history, while the many happy centuries that preceded it are but occasionally glanced at by ancient writers; and were it not for the defeats and calamities which the Achæans suffered in later times, we should, perhaps, be ignorant that their ancestors anciently enjoyed an equitable and generous policy, which, being transported with them into Magna Græcia, could not fail to promote the happiness and prosperity of that delightful country.||

The state of
the Dorians
at the time
of their emi-
gration to

The condition of the Dorians, at the time when they planted colonies in Italy and Sicily, is not less worthy of remark. The Dorian states of Peloponnesus were then universally subject to the gen-

* Polybius, l. ii. p. 178.

† Schook. Achaia, apud Gronov. Thes. t. v.

‡ Polyb. Excerpt. Legat. & Titus Livius, l. xxxviii. & xxxix.

§ Xenophon, in his Greek history, speaks of the excellence of the Achæan laws, in treating a passage of history which will be related in the sequel. Polybius was evidently engaged to enter deeply into this subject, through the reason assigned in the text.

the government of limited but hereditary princes, or to magistrates chosen from the descendants of the ancient royal families,* and who, thus adorned by birth, were sometimes still more ennobled by wisdom and virtue.† It is the nature of colonies to observe with affectionate respect the institutions of their mother country, which often improve by transplantation, and thrive and flourish in foreign lands, when they have withered and perished in the soil which originally produced and propagated them. Time and accident, and the various causes which have been explained in the course of this history, tended to change the ancient constitution, and to diminish the strength of the Grecian states on both sides the Corinthian isthmus. While fierce and frequent wars exhausted their population, the exclusive spirit of republican jealousy, which sternly refused strangers any participation in their government, or any protection from their laws, naturally repressed their vigour and stunted their growth. The colonies in Magna Græcia, enjoying a wide territory before them, had not the same interference of interest, and found sufficient employment in subduing the original inhabitants of that country, without commencing hostilities against each other. Nor were they more ambitious to subdue the barbarous natives, than solicitous to incorporate them into their own communities. The kings, or nobility, of Magna Græcia, secure of their own pre-eminence, felt‡ nothing of

Magna Græcia.

Circumstances favourable to the new settlers in that country.

* These were properly the only nobility in Greece; they were called *εὐπατριδαι*, and long held sway in all the Grecian states. S. Petitus has collected the most important passages concerning them in his commentary on the ancient Athenian law, "*Τους Εὐπατριδας γινώσκων τα θεία, και παρεχειν αρχοντας, και νομων διδασκαλους ειναι, και 'οσιων και 'ιερων εξηγητας.*" "That the Eupatridæ, or nobility, administer the rites of religion, fill the offices of magistracy, interpret the laws, and explain all sacred and divine matters."

† Thucyd. l. i.

‡ The same policy was practised by Macedon; and as we shall have occasion to show, was the primary cause of the Macedonian greatness.

the republican jealousies which prevailed in the mother country. They received with pleasure new citizens, or rather subjects, from whatever quarter they might come. The Barbarians adopted the language and manners of the nation to whom they were associated; their children received a Grecian education; and the states of Italy and Sicily thus increasing by degrees, could soon boast, the former of Crotona, Tarentum, Sybaris, Rhegium; the latter of Syracuse, Agrigentum, Messen , Himera, and several other cities, which rivalled or surpassed the wealth of Athens or Corinth, and the populousness of Thebes, Argos, or Sparta.

The oppression of the Asiatic Greeks brought new inhabitants to Italy and Sicily;

The wars, conquests, or oppressions, but above all, the civil dissensions, which in the sixth century before Christ disturbed and deformed the coast of Ionia, and the other Grecian colonies in the islands and continent of Asia, brought frequent accessions of inhabitants to the shores of Magna Gr cia. In that age the Asiatic Greeks had attained greater proficiency, both in the useful and in the agreeable arts, than any other portion of the Grecian name; but they had also sunk deeper in voluptuousness and luxury. Their poetry, which still remains, alike attests the refinement of their taste, and the corruption of their morals. The effeminate vices, for which the Ionians were thenceforth in all ages infamous,* seem to have taken deep root in that century; and it is probable, that along with their poetry, music, and painting, they communicated also their dissolute manners and artificial appetites to the Greeks of Italy and Sicily.

But whether this be admitted, or whether we suppose that, according to the ordinary course of events, the inhabitants of Magna Gr cia having attained opulence by industry, were

* *Motus doceri gaudet Ionicos*
Matura virgo, & fingitur artibus,
Jam nunc, & incestos amores
De tenero meditator ungue.

HORACE.

stimulated by riches to licence; it is acknowledged by all writers on this part of history, that the Greek cities of Italy, and particularly Sybaris and Crotona, had degenerated from their ancient maxims, and fallen a prey to the most dangerous errors and vices, when Pythagoras came to their relief, about five hundred and fifty years before the Christian æra.

The philosophy of Pythagoras forms an important object in the history of the human mind: and if we admit the concurring testimony of ancient authors,* the philosophy, or rather the legislation, of this extraordinary man, reformed and improved the institutions and policy of Magna Græcia, and contributed in an eminent degree, not only to the quiet and happiness, but to the industry, power, and splendour, of that celebrated country. Lest this influence should appear too great, and even incredible, in a stranger who is known to have studiously declined all public offices and authority, the occasion requires that we should explain the means by which such extraordinary effects were produced.

which are reformed by Pythagoras.

Pythagoras was born at Samos,† when Samos was the richest and most flourishing of all the Grecian isles. His father, Mnesarchus, being a person of distinction in his country,‡ the promising youth was carefully instructed in the learning known or valued in that early age. Music, poetry and the gymnastic exercises, formed the principal part of his education; but the young philosopher, if we may anticipate

History of Pythagoras. Olymp. xlv. 1. A. C. 600.

His education.

* Particularly Aristoxenus, the learned disciple of Aristotle (apud. Stobæum, Serm. xli. ;) various ancient authors cited by Jamblichus and Porphyry as well as by Diogenes Laertius, l. viii. ; to which add Justin, l. xx. and Cicero, Tusc. Quæst. de Amicitia, & de Oratore. "Pythagoras exornavit eam Græciam quæ Magna dicta est, & privatim & publice, præstantissimis & institutis & artibus." Cicero de Amicitia.

† Isocrates in Busiri. Titus Livius, l. i. c. xviii. Lucian. Lexiphanes. To these authorities we may add, that Pythagoras is represented on several Samian coins. Fabric. Bibl. Græca t. i. p. 455.

‡ Mnesarchus was sent from Samos to consult the oracle of Delphi, probably on some public occasion. Jam. in Vit. Pythag.

that name, was not* indifferent to the discoveries of Thales, the first Grecian who nearly calculated an eclipse of the sun; and he early set himself to rival the Milesian sage in his favourite studies. It is recorded, that he learned eloquence from Pherecydes of Syros,† who resided a considerable time in the isle of Samos, and who is famous in the literary history of Greece, as the first author in prose‡. Pittacus of Lesbos, Bias of Priené, and the other sophists, or wise men (as they were emphatically styled by their contemporaries) who then flourished in Asiatic Greece, and whose abilities and virtue had raised them, in troubled times, to the head of the several communities of which they were respectively members, excited the kindred ambition of Pythagoras, who appears to have been early animated with the desire of acquiring just renown, by promoting public happiness. In his eighteenth year he visited the continent of Greece, and gained the prize of wrestling at the Olympic games,|| where his vigour, address, and beauty were beheld with admiration by the multitude; while the opening virtues of his mind were still more admired by men of sense and discernment. In conformity with the practice of an age when the feeble rays of knowledge were scattered over a wide surface, and much pains were requisite to collect them, he withdrew himself from the applauses of his countrymen, and for a longer time than was usual with the Grecian travellers. This circumstance gave occasion to many fables concerning the extent and variety of his voyages.§ But it is certain that

* Apollon. apud Jamblichum.

† Diogenes apud Porph.

‡ Plin. N. H. l. vii. c. 56.

|| Jambl. Porph. &c.

§ The travels of the Greek philosopher were spoken of in vague terms, and magnified even by great writers. *Ultimas terras lustrasse Pythagoram, Democritum, Platonem accepimus. Cicero de Finibus, l. iv. c. 19.* We may well believe, then, that such men as Hermippus (apud Joseph. advers. Apionem,) Apollonius, Jamblichus, &c. would carry their exaggerations to the highest degree of extravagance on this fertile subject. The chief source of these fables, and of the supposed learning of the Magi, Chaldeans, Indians, &c. may be found in the credulous or lying writers who accompanied Alexander in his eastern expedition. At their return to Greece, they magnified the learning,

he resided several years in the ancient kingdom of Egypt,* which had been long familiarly known to the Grecian mari-

as well as the power and wealth, of the nations conquered by their patron; they were solicitous to persuade their countrymen, that their ancestors had learned their philosophy from people whose names they had never before heard; and their own vanity was flattered by having visited, and familiarly known those fancied instructors of mankind. Clearchus, Onesicritus and Callisthenes, were the most celebrated of these writers, of whom Diogenes Laertius, or rather a far superior man whom he cites, says, *Λανθάνουσι δὲ αὐτοὺς τὰ τῶν Ἑλλήνων καταρθώματα βαρβαροῖς προσάπτοντες*. "They are mistaken when they refer the Grecian discoveries to the Barbarians." It was natural for the eastern nations, when they had adopted the language and learning of the Greeks, to avail themselves of Grecian authorities, to prove how much that celebrated nation owed to people whom they proudly denominated Barbarians. Hence the fables of Berosus the Chaldean, of Manetho the Egyptian, of Sanchonithon the Phœnician. We except from this class of fabulists the Jew, Josephus, the antiquity of whose nation rests on evidence which it would be irreverent to name in such company. Had Pythagoras or Thales been acquainted with the Jewish religion, they would have learned far nobler notions of the Deity, than those which it appears they entertained. Anaxagoras, surnamed *ὁ νους*, the preceptor of the great Pericles, was the first Grecian philosopher who saw, by the light of reason, the natural and moral attributes of God, so sublimely described in the Psalms of David. Yet it never was said that Anaxagoras had seen the Psalms, the Books of Moses, or any part of the sacred writings; and it may be remarked, that Josephus himself, in his first book (cont. Appion.) however zealous to prove, that the Greeks derived their knowledge from the East, can cite no author in favour of this opinion, who lived before the age of Alexander.

* There is a famous passage in Isocrates' panegyric of Busiris, which might seem to contradict what is said in the preceding note, if we did not reflect, that the rules of panegyric require not always a strict adherence to historical truth. In speaking of the ancient wisdom and piety of the Egyptians, and particularly of the sacerdotal order, he says, that he himself is not the first who perceived and acknowledged their merit; that many philosophers had done this before him, and particularly Pythagoras the Samian. *Ὅς ἀφικομενός ἐς Αἴγυπτον, καὶ μαθητὴς ἐκεῖνων γενομένος τὴν τε ἀλλήν φιλοσοφίαν πρῶτος ἐς τοὺς Ἕλληνας ἐκόμισε, καὶ τὰ περὶ τὰς θυσίας τε καὶ τὰς ἀγίας τὰς ἐν τοῖς ἱεροῖς ἐκίφανερον τῶν ἄλλων ἐπονομάσεν ἡγούμενος, εἰ καὶ μὴδὲν αὐτῷ διὰ τὰντα πλεῖον γίγνεται παρὰ τῶν θεῶν, ἀλλὰ παρὰ γὰρ τοῖς ἀνθρώποις ἐκ τούτων μάλιστα ἀν' εὐδοκαίμην' ὅπερ αὐτῷ καὶ συνέβη. Τόσους γὰρ εὐδοξία τοὺς ἄλλους ἅπαντας ὑπερβαλεν, ὥς· καὶ τοὺς νεώτερον ἅπαντας ἐπιθυμῶν αὐτοῦ μαθητὰς εἶναι, καὶ τοὺς πρεσβύτερον ἤδιον ὄραν παιδὰς αὐτῶν ἐκείνῳ συγγιγνομένους ἢ τῶν οἰκίῳν ἐπιμελουμένων*. "Who coming to Egypt, and

ners, and where the son of Mnesarchus might probably enjoy the protection of many hereditary friends. In that country he probably made some additions to his knowledge in arithmetic and geometry; he certainly learned many traditions concerning the gods, and the human soul; but what particularly deserved his attention was, the secret symbolic writing of the priests, and the singular institutions and policy of the sacerdotal order, by which that body of men had long been enabled to govern prince and people.* At his return from Egypt and the east, Pythagoras found his country governed, or rather insulted, by the artful and long fortunate Polycrates; a tyrant whose power seemed so firmly established, that there remained no hopes of subverting it, and under whose jealous eye the son of Mnesarchus could neither display his talents, nor enjoy personal security: he therefore returned to European Greece, and again assisted at the Olympic games; where, being saluted by the then honoured name of Sophist, he modestly declined that distinction for the humbler title of Philosopher; and when asked what he precisely meant by this new appellation, he is said to have replied, "That, in the same manner as at the Olympic assembly, some men came to contend for crowns and honours, others to sell their merchandise, and a third class merely to see and examine every thing which passed in that celebrated convention; so, on the greater theatre of the world, while many struggled for the glory of a name, and

being instructed by the priests of that country, first introduced other kinds of learning into Greece, and particularly a more accurate knowledge of religious rites and ceremonies," (I have generalized the expression *θεῶν καὶ ἀνθρώπων ἐν τοῖς ἱεροῖς*) "of which he was a careful observer, thinking that although he were entitled to no peculiar favour on that account from the gods, he would thereby at least procure esteem among men, which also happened to him; for he so far eclipsed the glory of all other philosophers, that all the young desired to become his disciples, and the old were better pleased to see their sons in the company of Pythagoras, than engaged in the most lucrative pursuits." If what is said in my account of the life and writings of Isocrates be considered with attention, this passage will only serve to confirm the observations in the text.

* Herodotus and Diodorous Siculus, passim; and Strabo, l. x. p. 482.

many for the advantages of fortune; a few, and but a few, neither covetous of money, nor ambitious of fame, were contented with beholding the wonders of so magnificent a spectacle.”* This definition has been often cited, because it well agrees with the contemplative notions generally ascribed to the Pythagorean school; but it will appear in the sequel, that the philosophy of Pythagoras was of a more practical kind.

From Olympia and the republic of Elis, he travelled to the neighbouring territory of Sparta,† and spent a considerable time in that capital, diligently studying the laws of Lycurgus, and observing the manners and genius of the best governed, most virtuous, and most prosperous of all the Grecian states. Here he beheld a constitution of government (the wisdom of which had been long approved by experience) founded on a system of education: and combining, in his clear capacious mind, the Spartan laws and discipline with a mixture of the Egyptian craft and policy, he framed that sublime plan of legislation, which was to be far more extensive than the institutions of Lycurgus; and which, at first fixing its root in a small sect at Crotona, was destined, in twenty or thirty years, to diffuse its flourishing branches over Italy and Sicily.

Pythagoras arrived at the capital of Italian Greece in his fortieth year, in the full vigour of his mind and body.‡ His fame, doubtless, preceded him; since, whoever had honourably distinguished himself in the general convention at Olympia, was speedily known and celebrated in the remotest provinces of Greece. His personal acquaintances among the Italian Greeks, whose esteem, or rather respect, he had acquired in that august assembly, would naturally be loud in his praises; and the manners of the age, in which men lived together in crowds, and enjoyed their pastimes, or transacted their serious business with un-

Causes of
his authori-
ty in Italy.

* Cicero (Tusc. Quæst. v. 3.) has translated a passage to this purpose from Heraclides Ponticus, the scholar of Plato; and the original passage of Heraclitus is still preserved in Jamblichus.

† Porphy. Jambli. & Justin. l. xx.

‡ Aristoxen apud Jambli.

disguised freedom, in temples and gymnasia, contributed to the rapid increase of his friends and admirers. His superior talents. Upon his arrival at Crotona, he appeared in the public places, displaying his dexterity in those exercises and accomplishments, which were the fashionable objects of pursuit, and the principal sources of honour. His skill in music and medicine, sciences which were far better understood in his native country than in Magna Græcia, procured him particular regard; nor can we hesitate to believe, that his mathematical and natural knowledge would be highly admired by the Greeks of Italy, who, having recently received the first tincture of arts and sciences from the Asiatics, cultivated them with that ardour which novelty inspires; and who seem hitherto to have gained in point of knowledge and civility, in proportion as they had lost in purity of life and manners, by an acquaintance with their Eastern brethren.

His manner of life. Neither the voluptuousness nor the refinement of the inhabitants of Magna Græcia, were incompatible with the hopes and fears of the most puerile superstition; and Pythagoras, who had seen and examined the rites and ceremonies employed by remote nations, celebrated for their antiquity and their wisdom, to avert the displeasure, or to gain the good will of their invisible protectors, called forth the whole force of this powerful, yet dangerous instrument of policy, to excite respect for his person and reverence for his instructions. He carefully frequented, at an early hour, the temples of the gods; his regular purifications and sacrifices announced superior sanctity of character; his food was of the purest kind, that no corporeal stain might interrupt the fancied communication with his celestial friends; and he was clothed in the linen of Egypt, which formed the dress* of the sacerdotal order in that native land of superstition, as well as of the Athenian magistrates and nobles, in the early and pious times of their republic.† The respect excited by such artifices (if we may degrade by that name the means used to deceive

* Diodorus.

† Thucyd. l. i.

men into their duty and happiness) was enhanced by the high renown, the long travels, the venerable aspect, the harmonious voice, the animated and affecting eloquence, of the Samian philosopher. His hearers sometimes amounted to two thousand of the principal citizens of Crotona: and the magistrates of that republic erected, soon after his arrival among them, an elegant and spacious edifice, which was appropriated to the virtuous lessons of this admired stranger, who pleased their taste, and gratified their fancy, while he condemned their manners, and reproached their vices. Equally rapid and astonishing, and not more astonishing than advantageous, if we may credit the general voice of antiquity, was the reformation produced at Crotona in persons of every age, and of either sex, by this singular man. The women laid aside their ornaments, and resumed their modesty; the youth preferred their duty to their pleasures; the old improved their understanding, and almost neglected to improve their fortunes.

The happy
revolution
which he
produced at
Crotona.

Yet this revolution of manners was not surely so instantaneous, as the concurring exaggerations of wonder and credulity were naturally inclined to represent it. The same writers, who would thus magnify the fame of Pythagoras, acknowledge, that soon after coming to Crotona, he chose a select number of his most assiduous disciples, and those chiefly persons of weight in the republic, whose temper, character, and views best suited his own. These were formed into a distinct association or brotherhood, into which none were admitted who possessed not qualities and endowments worthy of that honour. In order to confirm this association, as well as to obtain the purposes for which it had been instituted, Pythagoras employed the cypher, or symbolic writing, and other secrets, which he had learned from the wisdom, or rather cunning, of the Egyptian priests: his scholars were taught certain signs or words, by which they might know each other; they could correspond, when separated by place, in an unknown character; and strangers of all countries, Greeks and Barbarians, were promiscuously admitted into the

His school.

society, after undergoing a due probation as to their dispositions and understanding. In a few years, three hundred men, all Pythagoreans, held the sovereignty of Crotona; the influence of the new sect extended with rapidity over Locri, Rhegium, Catana, and other cities of Italy and Sicily; the disciples of Pythagoras were diffused over ancient Greece, and the isles of the Ægæan sea; and it seemed as if the sage of Samos, whose nobler ambition declined and disdained any particular office of power and dignity, had conceived the sublime idea of forming a school of enlightened statesmen, who might govern the world, while they were themselves governed by wisdom and virtue.

Its influence on affairs of state.
Olymp. lviil. 3.
A. C. 550.

His great views.

Pythagoras was deeply persuaded, that the happiness of nations depends chiefly on the government under which they live; and the experience of his own times, and of his own island in particular, might teach him the dangerous tendency of democratic turbulence on the one hand, and jealous tyranny on the other.* He preferred there-

His politics.

* A striking example of this appeared at that time in Sicily, if we credit Jamblichus, who places the reign of Phalaris, at Agrigentum, in the age of Pythagoras. The doubtful, or rather incredible, history of this tyrant, may be comprised in few words. His reign, of about sixteen years, was distinguished by intolerable atrocities. He burned his enemies in a brazen bull; and, as lust or cruelty happened to direct, sometimes abused, and sometimes eat, boys. Phalaris, together with his mother and friends, (could such a monster have friends?) were burned by the long-injured Agrigentines in his own bull. This is the abominable tyrant, whose spurious letters furnished an opportunity for Dr. Bentley to display his profound erudition (see his Dissert. upon Phalaris.) But that very learned man seems not to suspect, that the popular history of Phalaris is as spurious as his epistles. It was a common artifice among the Greek poets and orators (see, in vol. i. p. 272, the speech of Sosicles the Corinthian,) to exaggerate the vices of bad princes. Of this we shall find many examples in the following parts of this work. This practice began early: for Pindar says,

Τὸν δὲ ταυρῷ χαλκῷ παντὴρα νηλεὲς νόον

Ἐχθρὰ Φαλαριν κατέχει τὰντα φάτις.

PRŒT. i. Ἐπιδ. καλ. 11.

Aristotle mentions *Τὸ περὶ Φαλαριν λεγόμενον*, the hearsay about Phalaris,

fore, to all governments, a moderate aristocracy; which seems, without exception, to have been the well founded opinion of the greatest men of antiquity, since, under the administration of senates, the republics of Greece, of Rome, and of Carthage, attained their highest prosperity and splendour. Yet he was extremely averse to arbitrary power, whatever shape it might assume; and the main aim of his institution was, to prevent oppression in the magistrates and licentiousness in the people. The dead letter of the law could never, he thought, effect that salutary purpose, until men were so trained by education and discipline, as to regard the great duties of life as its most agreeable amusement, and to consider the esteem of their fellow-citizens, and their own, as the chief source of their enjoyment. Magistrates, thus formed, would command a willing obedience, and the inhabitants of Magna Græcia must soon attain the most perfect state of which political society is susceptible.

which Aspasius explains, Ὁ δὲ Φάλαρις λέγεται φάγειν τὸν ἑαυτοῦ παῖδα. Phalaris is said to have eaten his own son. In the same chapter (c. v. l. 6. Ethic. Nicum.) speaking of brutal passions, Aristotle instances Phalaris sometimes devouring boys, sometimes using them as the instruments of an absurd venereal pleasure: Πρὸς ἀφροδισίων ἀτόπων ἡδονήν. The philosopher does not say, that he believes these monstrous fictions, any more than Cicero, "Ille nobilis taurus, quem crudelissimus omnium tyrannorum Phalaris habuisse dicitur;" l. iv. in Verrem, c. 33. Timæus, the historian of Sicily, who was more likely than any other writer to be well informed concerning the transactions in his own island, represents the story of Phalaris' bull as a mere fable. Polyb. Excerpt. ver. 3. p. 47. Polybius, indeed, attempts to refute Timæus, but I think, as to the main point, with little success. Nor is it surprising that this judicious writer should be carried along by the torrent. The republicans of Greece and Rome delighted in blackening the characters of tyrants; Τραγῶδουντες δὲ τὴν ὁμοιότητα τῶν τροπῶν, καὶ τὴν ἀσεβείαν τῶν πράξεων; "exaggerating, after the manner of tragedians, the fierceness of their manners, and the impiety of their actions." For this reason, the absurd fictions concerning Dionysius of Syracuse, Alexander of Pheræ, &c. are related by many respectable writers. For this reason Hieronymus was described in the blackest colours, vide Excerpt. ex. Polyb. l. vii. p. 10. And for this reason the enormous cruelties of Phalaris, which no nation, and far less the Sicilians in that age, could have tolerated, received countenance from some of the highest authorities of antiquity.

Morality.

To explain at large the system of Pythagoras, would be to write a treatise of sublime, yet practical morality since his conclusions are strictly founded on the nature of man. Besides the propensities common to us with inferior natures, and besides the selfish and artificial passions of avarice and ambition, he found in the human breast the seeds of nobler faculties, fitted to yield an incomparably more durable, more perfect, and more certain gratification. The chief happiness of the mind must be sought in itself, in the enjoyment of intellectual and moral pleasure. Our reflex thoughts are ever, and intimately present with us; and although the bustle of external objects, and the tumult of passion may sometimes divert their current, they can never exhaust their source. The reflections on our own conduct will be continually occurring to our fancy, whatever pains we may take to exclude them; nor can voluptuous enjoyment, or ambitious activity, ever so totally occupy the mind of a Persian satrap, or a Grecian demagogue, but that their principal happiness or misery, in the whole course of life, must chiefly depend upon their contemplations of the past, and upon their hopes and fears about futurity. To strengthen this great ground-work of morality, Pythagoras employed the whole force of education and habit. Rules were laid down, to which the members of his respected order bound themselves to conform, and from which none could swerve, without exclusion from a society of which they proved themselves unworthy. The different periods of life had each its appropriated employment. The youth were carefully instructed in the gymnastic exercises, in literature,*

* So I have translated *Εν γραμμασι και τοις αλλοις μαθημασι*, of Aristoxenus apud Stobæum, Serm. xli. The learned reader will perceive, that I comprehend under the name of youth, the two different periods of life οὐ *ἡλικίαι*, which the Greeks denoted by the words *παις* and *νεανίσκος*, boy, and young man. I have done this, because it was not the intention of Aristoxenus, to say that the young men were not still to be employed in literature and science, or that the boys were to be kept ignorant of the laws and constitution. The rules of the Pythagorean school, and the laws of Lycurgus, often explain each other. See vol. i. p. 100, & seq. It may be worthy of re-

and in science, and especially in the laws and constitution of their country. Their time was so diversified by successive study, exercise, and repose, that no leisure remained for the premature growth of dangerous passions; and it was an important maxim of the Pythagorean school that many things were best learned late,* especially love; from which, if possible, the youth should be restrained till their twentieth year, and after that period should rarely, and with many precautions, indulge a passion, always hurtful to the weak, and which, when intemperately indulged, enfeebled the most vigorous. He required in those who had attained the age of manhood, that they should no longer live for themselves, but for the business of the community of which they were members. They were to employ the greatest part of the day in the duties of public spirit and patriotism; in the laborious or dangerous offices committed to their charge; and to derive their chief reward from reading in the eyes of their admiring countrymen, the history of their generous exploits; and from beholding all around them, the happy effects of their probity, beneficence, and fortitude.

The Pythagoreans were strictly enjoined, as their earliest and latest work, to review the actions of the past, and, if time permitted, of many preceding days. In the morning they repaired alone to the temples, to solitary mountains and forests; and after there conversing with themselves, joined in the conversation of their friends, with whom they assembled, in small companies, to an early and frugal meal, discussed different subjects of philosophy or politics, regulated their conduct for the ensuing day, and by the mutual strength and encouragement acquired in this select society, prepared for the tumultuous bustle

Rules for
the conduct
of his dis-
ciples,

mark, that Jean Jaques Rousseau has borrowed what is rational and practical in his system of education from these two great sources, as illustrated by Plutarch's tract on the subject.

* Aristoxen. apud Stobæum, Sermon. lxi. This is the great principle of Rousseau in his *Emile*. The passage of Aristoxenus concerning love, is almost literally translated in that ingenious but fanciful work.

of the world, and the contentions of active life. The evening was spent as the morning, with this difference, that they then indulged in the moderate use of flesh and wine, from which they rigidly abstained during the day; and the whole concluded with that self-examination which was the fundamental maxim of the Pythagorean school.

which coincide with the institutions of Lycurgus.

To enter more fully into the principles of this association, would be repeating what has been formerly observed concerning the laws of Lycurgus. It is sufficient barely to mention, that, like the legislator of Sparta, Pythagoras enjoined the highest respect for age; that, like him, he raised the weaker sex from that state of inferiority in which they were ungenerously kept in all other countries of Greece; that he inured his disciples to temperance and sobriety through the same means employed by Lycurgus: and that both these great men regarded health and vigour of body as the main principle and spring of mental energy; that the probationary silence of the Pythagoreans, which credulity has so much exaggerated, was nothing more than that prudent, recollected behaviour, required by Lycurgus, who prized higher the caution of silence than the readiness* of speech; and that the intimacy of the Spartan and Pythagorean friendships, and almost the community of goods, naturally flowed from the general spirit and genius of their respective systems;† so that the rules of the Pythagorean order were little more than a transcript of the Spartan laws, as these laws themselves were only a refinement on the generous and manly institutions of the heroic ages.‡

Origin of the fictions concerning Pythagoras.

In the history of a man who entertained such just notions of human life, as did the founder of the Pythagorean sect, we may at once reject, as fabulous, the tales related by the vain, lying Greeks, who lived in and after the age of Alexander, when their nation seems to have lost the love of truth along with its liberty,

* Plut. in Lycurg.

† See vol. i. p. 104.

‡ Diodor. l. xii. p. 77, &c.

as well as the ridiculous wonders of the later Platonists, those contemplative visionaries, who, during the first centuries of the Christian æra, degraded ancient philosophers, by describing *their* active and useful lives, as if they had resembled their own scholastic tranquillity. Yet, after all, should the least extraordinary account of the Pythagorean order still seem incredible, it need only be observed, that modern history, and even our own observation, may have made us acquainted with orders, of another kind, of which the rules are more difficult to be observed than those of the Pythagoreans; and it is equally unreasonable and ungenerous to suppose, that what our own experience teaches us may be done by the illiberal spirit of superstition, could not in a happier age, be effected by the love of glory, of virtue, and of mankind.

The concurring testimony of historians assures us, that the school of Pythagoras had flourished above forty years, to the unspeakable benefit of Magna Græcia, when a war arose between Crotona and Sybaris, the latter of which had ever contemptuously rejected the Pythagorean institutions. The city of Sybaris was founded (as above mentioned) by the Achæans, on the confluence of the river Sybaris, from which the city derives its name, and the winding stream of Crathis, which descends from the Lucanian mountains. The fertility of the soil, the happy temperature of the climate, the resources of fishing, navigation, manufactures, and commerce, conspired, with the salutary effects of the Achæan laws, wonderfully to augment, in the course of two centuries, the strength and populousness of Sybaris, which was surrounded by walls nine miles in extent, commanded twenty-five subordinate cities, and, could we credit the evidence of writers often prone to exaggeration, brought three hundred thousand men into the field.* Riches and luxury proved fatal to the Sybarites, whose effeminacy passed into a proverb,† which has been

War between Crotona and Sybaris.

The Sybarites conquered by

* Strabo, l. vi. p. 263. Diodor. *ibid*.

† Athenæus, l. xii. p. 518.

Milo the
Pythagorean.
Olymp.
lxvii. 4.
A. C. 509.

transmitted to modern times. In a decisive battle, they were defeated by the citizens of Crotona under the command of Milo, a favourite disciple of Pythagoras, who had already obtained universal renown by his Olympic victories.*

Sedition in
Crotona.
Proves fatal to the
Pythagoreans there.

But the destruction of Sybaris was almost alike fatal to Crotona. The inferior ranks of men in that city, intoxicated with prosperity, and instigated by the artful and ambitious Cylon, whose turbulent manners had excluded him from the order

of Pythagoras, into which he had repeatedly attempted to enter, became clamorous for an equal partition of the conquered territory of Sybaris; which being denied as inconsistent with the nature of aristocratical government, they secretly conspired against their magistrates, attacked them by surprise in the senate-house, put many to death, and drove the rest from their country. Pythagoras himself died soon afterwards, in extreme old age, at Metapontum in Lucania.† His disciples were scattered over Magna Græcia, and particularly Sicily, which, at the time of the Carthaginian invasion, was governed by men who had imbibed the sublime spirit of their illustrious master.

The Carthaginians invade Sicily.
Olymp.
lxxv. 1.
A. C. 480.

Gelon, who eleven years before that event, had mounted the throne of Syracuse, was entitled, by the unanimous suffrage of his subjects, to the glorious, though often prostituted appellation of Father of his country.‡ The mildness of his govern-

ment restored the felicity of the heroic ages, whose equitable institutions had much affinity (as above observed) with the political system of Pythagoras. This virtuous prince had cemented an alliance with Theron, king of Agrigentum, by taking his daughter in marriage; and the confederacy of the two principal states of Sicily seemed to have diffused security and happiness over the whole island, when the immense arma-

* Strabo, *ibid.* Pausanias, l. vi. p. 369.

† Aristoxenus.

‡ Ælian. *Var. Hist.* l. xiii. c. xxxvii. Plut. in *Timol.*

ment of Carthage was beheld off the northern coast. Though not absolutely destitute of naval strength, the Sicilians had nothing by which they could oppose a fleet of two thousand galleys. The enemy landed without opposition in the spacious harbour, or rather bay, of Panormus, whose name may be still recognised in the modern capital of Palermo, where the Carthaginians had planted one of their most ancient colonies. Their forces were commanded by Hamilcar, who was deemed a brave and experienced leader. The first care of this general was to fortify two camps; the one destined for his fleet which, according to the practice of that age, was drawn on shore; the other intended as a safe retreat for his army, which immediately prepared to form the siege of Himera. Theron used proper measures to defend the second city in his dominions, until his son-in-law, the intrepid Gelon, should arrive to his assistance at the head of an army of fifty thousand foot and five thousand horse. While this numerous army advanced by rapid marches, towards Himera, they rencountered a foraging party of the enemy, and made ten thousand prisoners. But what appeared a still more important booty to the discernment of Gelon, they seized a messenger from Selinus, a city in the neighbourhood of Agrigentum, which had entered into a treacherous correspondence with the Carthaginians. The prisoner conveyed a letter to Hamilcar, acquainting him that the Selinuntines would not fail to send the cavalry demanded from them at the appointed time, which was likewise particularly specified. Upon this discovery, Gelon founded a stratagem, not more daring than successful. He commanded a chosen body of troops to advance in the night towards the Carthaginian camp, and by day-break to present themselves to Hamilcar, as his Selinuntine auxiliaries; and when admitted by this artifice, within the rampart, to assassinate the general and set fire to the fleet.*

* Diodor. l. ix. sect. 25, & seq. Polyæn. l. i. c. xxvii.

Defeated
by a strata-
gem.

It happened on the fatal day, that Hamilcar offered a solemn sacrifice to the cruel divinity of Carthage, who delighted in human victims. While he performed this abominable rite, the soldiers surrounded him unarmed, in the gloomy silence of their detested superstition, with which their minds were totally penetrated. The Sicilian cavalry, being admitted without suspicion, thus found no difficulty to execute their audacious design. Hamilcar, while he sacrificed an innocent and noble youth to his blood-thirsty god, was himself despatched with a dagger; and, next moment, the Carthaginian ships were in a blaze. A chain of Sicilian sentinels, posted on the neighbouring eminences, intimated to Gelon the happy success of his stratagem; of which, in order fully to avail himself, that gallant commander immediately conducted the main body of his troops to the Carthaginian army, while it was yet agitated by surprise and terror at the sudden conflagration. The furious onset of the Sicilians made a dreadful havoc among the astonished Barbarians, who recovering, however, their faculties, began to defend themselves with vigour; when the melancholy tidings that their ships were all burnt, and their general slain, drove them to despair and flight. Gelon commanded his troops not to give quarter to an enemy, who, though defeated, still seemed formidable by their numbers. It is reported, that an hundred and fifty thousand perished in the battle, and the pursuit. The remainder seized an eminence, where they could not long maintain themselves, for want of water and provisions. In the language of an ancient historian, all Africa seemed to be taken captive in Sicily. Gelon distributed the prisoners among the Sicilian cities, in proportion to the contingents of troops which they had respectively raised for this memorable service. The greater part falling to the share of Syracuse and Agrigentum, were employed in beautifying and enlarging those capitals,* whose magnificent monuments, still

Their dis-
asters.

* Cicero, Orat. iv. in Verrem.

conspicuous in their ruins, are supposed, with great probability, to be productions of Carthaginian labour.

The melancholy tidings affected Carthage with consternation and despair. The inhabitants of that city, ever shamefully depressed by bad fortune in proportion as they were immoderately elated by the deceitful gifts of prosperity, dreaded every moment to behold the victorious enemy in their harbour. To ward off this calamity, their ambassadors were sent to crave a suspension of hostilities on any terms the victorious Greeks might think proper to impose. Gelon received them with such moderation as marked the superiority of his character, and told them, that he would desist from every purpose of revenge, on condition that the Carthaginians paid two thousand talents of silver, to be distributed among the cities of Sicily, which had incurred trouble and expense by the war; that they henceforth abstained from the abominable practice of insulting the gods by human victims; that they erected two temples, one in Carthage, another in Syracuse, to preserve the memory of the war, and the articles of the peace.*

Treaty of
peace be-
tween Ge-
lon and the
Carthagini-
ans.

This honourable treaty was a prelude to that still more famous, concluded thirty years afterwards between the Athenians and Persians. It marked a nation superior to its enemies not only in valour but in humanity, and conferred more true glory than could be acquired by the most splendid series of victories. It might be expected, however, and seems much to have been desired, that a people so advantageously distinguished as were the Greeks during that age in arts and arms; a people who had repelled, defeated, and disgraced the most populous and powerful nations, and who were alike prompted by ambition and revenge, to the attainment of distant conquest, should have united their efforts against the enemies who still made war on them, and, advancing in a rapid career of victory,

Olymp.
lxxxii.
A. C. 449.

* Diodor. Sicul. *ibid.*

have diffused, along with their dominion, their manners, knowledge, and civility over the eastern world. But various events and causes, which we shall have occasion afterwards to explain, tended to detach the colonies of Magna Græcia from the interests of the mother country, as well as to disunite the two most powerful republics of that country by intestine discord.

While the fortune of Athens raised her to such power as threatened the liberty of Sicily and Greece, the kings of Syracuse and Agrigentum contented themselves with the humbler glory of embellishing their capitals with barbaric spoils, and producing those wonders of art, which, in the time of Cicero and Verres, were esteemed among the most precious monuments of antiquity.* The golden medals of Gelon, still preserved, and of the highest beauty,† justify the glowing expressions of the Roman orator.

Decay of
Magna Græ-
cia, and de-
struction of
the Pytha-
goreans.

In Italy, the citizens of Crotona had too soon cause to lament their insurrection against their magistrates, and their dereliction of the discipline of Pythagoras. They who had hitherto defeated superior numbers, who had furnished so many victors in the Olympic contest, and whose country was distinguished by the epithet of healthy, on a supposition that the vigorous bodies of its inhabitants proceeded from an effect of the climate, were now totally routed and put to flight at the river Sagra, with an army of an hundred and thirty thousand men, by the Locrians and Rhegians, whose forces were far less numerous. The other Greek cities of Italy, which are said to have imitated the fatal example of Crotona, were harassed by wars against each other, or against their barbarous neighbours. In consequence of these misfortunes, the Pythagoreans again recovered their credit; and about sixty years after the death of the great founder of their order, Zaleucus and

* Cicero in Verrem, passim.

† Mem. de Trevoux, l'an 1727, p. 1449.

Charondas, the first in Locri, the second in Thurium endeavoured to revive the Pythagorean institutions, which, perhaps, were too perfect for the condition of the times. In less than forty years a new persecution entirely drove the Pythagoreans from Italy, and completed, according to Polybius, the confusion and misery of that once happy country.*

* Polybius, i. 203.

CHAP. XII.

Glory of Athens.—Military Success of the Confederates.—Athens Rebuilt and Fortified.—Extent of its Walls and Harbours.—The Confederates take Byzantium.—Conspiracy of Pausanias.—Banishment of Themistocles.—Virtue of Aristides.—Cimon assumes the Command.—His illustrious Merits and Success.—Revolt of Egypt.—War in Cyprus.—Peace with Persia.—Domestic transactions of Greece.—The Athenian Greatness.—Envy of Sparta, Thebes, and Argos.—Earthquake in Sparta.—Revolt of the Helots.—War between the Elians and Pisans.—The Temple and Statue of Olympian Jupiter.—Dissensions in Argolis.—Revolt in Bæotia.—Truce of Thirty Years.—Character of Pericles.—Subjection of the Athenian Allies and Colonies.—Spirit of the Athenian Government.

The glory
of Athens
in arms.
A. C. 479.
—431.

FROM the battles of Mycalé and Plataea, to the memorable war of Peloponnesus, elapsed half a century, the most illustrious in the Grecian annals. A single republic, one of sixteen states whose united possessions hardly equalled the extent of Scotland, and whose particular territory is scarcely visible in a map of the world, carried on an offensive war against the Persian empire, and, though surrounded by jealous allies or open enemies, prosecuted this extraordinary enterprise with unexampled success; at length, granting such conditions of peace as the pride of victory may dictate, and the weight of accumulated disasters condescend to solicit or accept. In that narrow space of time the same republic erected, on the feeble basis of her scanty population and diminutive territory, a mighty mass of empire; established and confirmed her

authority over the extent of a thousand miles of the Asiatic coast, from Cyprus to the Thracian Bosphorus; took possession of forty intermediate islands,* together with the important straits which join the Euxine and the Ægean; conquered and colonised the winding shores of Macedon and Thrace, commanded the coast of the Euxine from Pontus to the Chersonesus Taurica, or Crim Tartary; and overawing the barbarous natives by the experienced terrors of her fleet,† protected against *their* injustice and violence, but at the same time converted to the purposes of her own ambition and interest, the numerous but scattered colonies which Miletus, and other Greek cities of Asia, had at various times established in those remote regions.‡ Our wonder will be justly increased, if we consider that Athens obtained those immortal trophies, not over ignorant savages or effeminate slaves, but over men who had the same language and laws, the same blood and lineage, the same arts and arms, in short, every thing common with the victors but their audacity and fortune.

But it is the peculiar glory of the Athenians that, during this rapid career of military and naval triumphs, they cultivated, with a generous enthusiasm, the arts which adorn alike war and peace, and improved those decorations of polished life into such perfection as few nations have attempted to imitate, and none aspired to surpass. During the administration of a single man, more works of elegance and splendour, more magnificent temples, theatres, porticos, and gymnasia were erected within the walls of Athens, than could be raised during many centuries in Rome, though mistress of the world, by the wealth and labour of tributary provinces.|| In the same period of time sculpture attained a sublimity, from which that noble

The glory
of Athens
in arts.

* Several of these islands had been formerly conquered by Athenian commanders, particularly Miltiades, as we have related above; but having rebelled against the severe government of Athens, they were finally subdued by Pericles.

† Plut. in Pericle.

‡ Strabo, Geograph. passim.

|| Plutarch. in Pericle.

art could never afterwards but descend and degenerate; and a republic hitherto inferior in works of invention and genius to several of her neighbours, and even of her own colonies, produced, in the single lifetime of Pericles, those inestimable models of poetry, eloquence, and philosophy,* which, in every succeeding age, the enlightened portion of mankind hath invariably regarded as the best standards, not merely of composition and style, but of taste and reason. The name of Greek seemed thenceforth to be lost into that of Athenian; Athenian writers are our surest and almost only guides in relating the subsequent transactions of the whole nation;† and from them we learn what is yet the most extraordinary circumstance respecting the Athenian empire, that it had been built on such stable foundations, and reared with such art and skill, as might have long defied the hostile jealousy of Greece and Persia, confederate in arms and resentment, if various causes, which human prudence could neither foresee nor prevent, had not shaken its firmness, and precipitated its downfall.‡

Such is the subject which I have undertaken to treat in this and the two following Chapters; a subject worthy to animate the diligence, and call forth the vigour of an historian: but, if he truly deserves that respected name, he will remember that it is less his duty to amuse the fancy by general description, than to explain, with precision and perspicuity, the various transactions of this interesting and splendid theme; to give the reader a full and distinct view of the complicated matter which it involves; and to remove every adventitious circumstance that might distract or dazzle the attention, as astronomers, in viewing the sun, are careful to ward off its surrounding splendour.

* Pericles may be considered as the contemporary of Socrates, Sophocles, Euripides, Thucydides, &c. since, although he died before them of the plague, these and other great men flourished during his administration.

† I mean Thucydides and Xenophon, together with the Athenian orators, philosophers, and poets.

‡ Thucyd. l. vii. & viii. *passim*.

The military success of the Athenians* (which naturally forms the first branch of the subject, because it not only supplied the materials of future improvements, but awakened that energy requisite to cultivate and complete them) includes three separate actions which were carried on at the same time, and conspired to the same end, yet cannot be related in one perpetual narrative, without occasioning some confusion of ideas, alike destructive of the pleasure and of the use of history. While we endeavour to keep each series of events unbroken and distinct, we must be careful to point out its influence on the simultaneous or succeeding transactions of the times, that our relation may be at once satisfactory and faithful. In such a delineation the trophies of the Persian war justly claim the first and most conspicuous place; the hostile animosity of rival states, which continually envied and opposed, but for reasons that will be fully explained, could neither prevent nor retard the growing superiority of Athens, shall occupy the middle of the picture; and we shall throw into the back ground the successive usurpations of that fortunate republic over her allies, colonies, and neighbours.

Military
success of
that re-
public.

Division of
the subject.

The common fears which, notwithstanding innumerable sources of animosity, had formed, and hitherto upheld a partial confederacy of the Greeks, were removed by the decisive victories of Plataea and Mycalé. After these memorable events, it was the first care of the Athenians to bring home their wives, children, and most valuable effects from the isles of Ægina and Salamis. In the latter island they celebrated their good fortune by a national solemnity. The sublime Sophocles joined in the chorus of boys which danced in exultation, around the

The Athe-
nians take
Sestos.
Olymp.
lxxv. 2.
A. C. 479.

* The chief materials for this portion of history consist in the first and second books of Thucydides; the eleventh and twelfth of Diodorus Siculus; Plutarch's lives of Themistocles, Aristides, Cimon, Pericles; Pausanias' Description of Greece, and Pliny's Natural History: scattered facts are supplied by other ancient writers, whose works will be carefully cited.

Barbarian spoils;* the valour of his predecessor, Æschylus, had contributed to the victories by which they were obtained; and his rival, the tender Euripides, was born in the isle of Salamis,† on that important day, which proved alike glorious to Greece, and fatal to Persia. But an attention to domestic concerns prevented not the Athenians from pushing the war with vigour, though deserted by the Spartans and other Peloponnesians, who sailed home before winter. The Asiatic colonies, animated by the recent recovery of freedom, seconded the Athenian ardour; and the confederates, having successfully infested the territories of the Great King, besieged and took the rich city of Sestos in the Chersonesus of Thrace, the only place of strength which adhered to the Persian interest in that fertile peninsula.‡

Athens rebuilt and fortified. Olymp. lxxv. 3, 4. A. C. 478, & 477.

During the two following years the war languished abroad, while the symptoms of jealousy and discord, which had already appeared in the separation of the Athenian and Spartan fleets, broke out with more virulence at home. The Athenians began the laborious task of rebuilding their ruined city, which the Persian spoils might contribute to enrich with uncommon magnificence, and which an acquaintance gained in the course of the war with the graceful forms of Ionic and Doric architecture, might enable them to adorn with more beauty and elegance than had yet been displayed in Europe. But the weighty advice of Themistocles prevailed on them to suspend this noble undertaking, and engaged them, instead of decorating their capital with temples, theatres, and gymnasia, to fortify it by walls of such strength and solidity as might thenceforth bid defiance to every enemy, whether foreign or domestic. In an age when the art of attack was so rude and imperfect, that the smallest fortress formed an object of importance, such a design could not fail of exciting jealousy in the neighbouring republics. The measure was scarcely determined when an embassy arrived

Jealousy of Sparta,

* Athenæus, l. i.

† Vitæ Euripid.

‡ Herodot. l. ix. c. cvi. Diodor. l. xi. c. xxxvii.

from Sparta, remonstrating against a design peculiarly dangerous and alarming to those who owed their safety to the weakness of their cities. "If the Greeks," it was said, "had possessed any town of impregnable strength, they must have found it impossible to expel the Barbarians from their country. The Athenians therefore, who had hitherto so generously maintained the cause of the confederacy, ought not only to desist from raising walls and fortifications, but even to interrupt a similar design in any republic beyond the isthmus; the Peloponnesus was alone sufficient to afford, in time of danger, a secure refuge to the whole Grecian name."

Themistocles easily unveiled the suspicion and hatred concealed under this specious mask of public utility, and encouraged his countrymen to elude the Spartan artifice by similar address. The senate of the five hundred, who gave audience to foreign ambassadors, declared that Athens would adopt no measure inconsistent with the public interest, and promised speedily to send an embassy, in their turn, which should remove all groundless apprehensions entertained on that subject. The Lacedæmonians having returned with this temporising answer, Themistocles was immediately despatched to Sparta, and expected, as he had previously concerted matters with his countrymen,* to be followed, at a proper time, by Aristides, the most respected character of his age; and by Lisicles, an able orator in the senate and assembly. Meanwhile the Athenian walls arose with unexampled celerity. Not only slaves, professed artificers, and the poorer classes of citizens, but magistrates of the first rank, the venerable fathers of the republic, wrought with their own hands, and with unceasing industry. The feeble efforts of women and children contributed to the useful labour. The most superstitious of men neglected their accustomed solemnities, and no longer acknowledged the distinction of days or seasons; nor did even the silent tranquillity of night abate the ardour of their diligence. The ruins of their city happily

discovered
by Themis-
tocles,

* Idem. *ibid.* & in Themist. Lysias Orat. Funeb. & cont. Alcib.

supplied them with a rich variety of materials; no edifice was spared, public or private, sacred or profane; the rude sculpture of ancient temples, even the mutilated tombs of their ancestors, were confounded in the common mass: and, at the distance of near a century, the singular appearance of the wall, composed of stones rough and unpolished, of various colours and unequal size, attested the rapid exertions by which the work had been constructed.*

and its effects eluded by his address.

Themistocles had hitherto, under various pretences, avoided declaring his commission before the Spartan senate. When urged to this measure by some of the magistrates who began to suspect his silence, he still alleged the absence of his colleagues as a sufficient reason for delay. But a company of travellers, who had recently visited Athens, gave intelligence of the extraordinary works carrying on in that city. This information, and the resentment of the Spartans which it occasioned, must have disconcerted a man who possessed less cool boldness than the commander at Salamis and Artemisium. But Themistocles, with the address congenial to his character, asserted, that it was unworthy the gravity of Sparta to regard the vague rumours of obscure men; and that, before lightly suspecting the approved fidelity of their allies, she ought to bestow some pains in discovering the truth. This declaration was enforced, it is said, by seasonable bribes to the most popular of the Ephori; so that the Spartans, deluded or corrupted, agreed to despatch a second embassy to Athens, consisting of some of their most respectable citizens. These men had no sooner arrived at their destination, than they were taken into custody, as pledges for the safe return of Themistocles and his colleagues, who by this time had brought him the welcome news, that the walls were completed. The Athenian ambassadors were now prepared to throw off the mask. They appeared in the Lacedæmonian assembly; and Themistocles, speaking for the rest, declared, that his countrymen needed

* Thucyd. l. i. c. lxxxix. & seq.

not to learn from their confederates, what measures were honourable to themselves, and beneficial to the common cause; that, by his advice, they had firmly defended their city against the assaults of open enemies and jealous friends; and that if Sparta entertained any resentment of this measure, which was evidently not less conducive to the public interest, than, perhaps, displeasing to private ambition, her anger would be equally unjust and impotent, since her own citizens must remain as hostages at Athens till his colleagues and himself should be restored in safety to their country.* Whatever secret indignation this speech might excite, the Spartans thought proper to disguise their animosity. They allowed the ambassadors to return home; but the conduct of Themistocles laid the foundation of that relentless hatred with which he was persecuted by Sparta, whose intrigues engaged all Greece, not excepting Athens herself, in the destruction of this illustrious citizen. Yet his eminent services, before they were interrupted by this storm of persecution, aggravates the shame of his country, and displays more fully her signal ingratitude.†

The ancient Athenian harbour of Phalericum was small, narrow, and inconvenient. To supply its defects, Themistocles, even before the Persian invasion, had recommended the Piræus, a place five miles distant from the citadel, furnished with three natural basins, which, if properly fortified, might form a far more commodious and secure station for the Athenian navy. The foundations were laid, and the walls began to rise, when the cruel ravages of the Barbarians interrupted the undertaking. Having in the preceding year fortified the city, Themistocles thought the present a proper time to finish the new harbour.‡ His address, his eloquence, and his bribes, were seasonably applied to divert the resentment of Sparta,

Themistocles builds the Piræus. Olymp. lxxv. 4. A. C. 477.

* Plut. &c. *ibid.*

† Diodor. l. xi. p. 437.

‡ Thucyd. l. i. c. xciii. Plut. in Themist. Diodor. xi. 436.

who, though thenceforth less jealous of the naval than military power of her rival, threatened, on this occasion, to enter Attica with an armed force. But the artful Athenian found means to convince the Spartans and their allies, that the construction of a strong and capacious harbour was a matter essentially requisite to the common interest of the Grecian confederacy. The work, meantime, was carried on at Athens with much spirit and activity, and, in less than a twelvemonth, brought to such a prosperous conclusion as could scarcely be credited, but on the testimony of a contemporary historian of the most approved diligence and fidelity.* The new walls were sufficiently broad to admit two carriages abreast; the stones composing them were of an immense size, strongly united by bars of iron, which were fastened by melted lead. The Piræus soon grew into a town, containing many thousand inhabitants. It was joined to the city by walls begun by Cimon but finished by Pericles, twenty years after the harbour

A. C. 457. itself had been constructed. The new buildings of Cimon and Pericles are often mentioned in history under the name of the Long Walls. They extended forty stadia on either side; and when added to the circumference of the ancient city (about sixty stadia,) give us for the whole circuit of the Athenian fortifications an extent of nearly eighteen English miles.†

The war
against Per-
sia con-
tinued by
the confe-
derates;

The altercations and animosities excited by such undertakings among the confederates at home, prevented not their united arms from assaulting the dominions of the Great King. Thirty Athenian, and fifty Peloponnesian ships had been employed to expel the Persian garrison from the sea-ports which they still occupied in the Hellespont, the Propontis, and the Ægean isles. The European fleet, being seasonably joined by various squadrons from the Greek cities of Asia, scoured the eastern shores of the Mediterranean, and delivered from

* Thucyd. ubi supra.

† Pausanias, p. 20, & seq. Strabo, p. 391, & seq. Plut. in Cimon.

oppression the long enslaved island of Cyprus. Their next operation must have been at a considerable distance of time, since they had to return near two hundred leagues westward, and then to proceed almost as far towards the north and the Bosphorus of Thrace. At the entrance of this celebrated canal, which joins the Euxine and Propontis, the city of Byzantium, destined in future ages to become the seat of empire, and long to remain the chief emporium of Europe and of Asia, had been first founded by a feeble colony of Megareans, which had gradually become populous, flourishing, and independent, but which was actually commanded and insulted by armed Barbarians. It is not probable that Xerxes, or his ministers, perceived the peculiar security of Byzantium, situate between the Bosphorus and the Hellespont, two straits, which it might occasionally shut to an hostile navy, or open to the fleets of commerce. But had they been sensible of this advantage, the misfortunes hitherto attending all their maritime enterprises, must have rendered it impossible to encourage their seamen to resist a victorious enemy. They discovered, however, more than their usual vigour, in defending by land, a place which they regarded as the centre of very valuable possessions. The adjacent coast of Thrace forms a striking contrast with the inland parts of that country. Instead of bleak heaths and and snowy mountains, which deform the inhospitable regions of Hæmus and Rhodopé, the maritime provinces produce in abundance, vines, olives, the most necessary grains, and the most delicious fruits. The climate vies with the delightful softness of the Asiatic plains; and the soil had been long cultivated by Greek colonies, who had widely extended themselves on both sides of Byzantium. The Barbarians strengthened the garrison of the place, which was well supplied with provisions, and commanded by Persians of the first distinction, among whom were several kinsmen of the Great King. The siege was obstinate, but the events of it are not described in history. It is only known, that the walls were stormed, and

who take
Byzantium.
Olymp. 1.
lxxvi. 1.
A. C. 476.

that an immense booty, together with many Persian princes and nobles, fell into the hands of the victors.*

Here ends the glory of Pausanias, who still commanded the forces of the confederacy; a man whose fame would rival the most illustrious names of antiquity, had he fallen in the siege of Byzantium. The rich spoils of Plataea, of which the tenth was allotted to him as general, raised him above the equality required by the republican institutions of his country. His recent conquest still farther augmented his wealth and inflamed his ambition: a continual flow of prosperity, which is apt to stagger the best regulated minds, overset the towering pride of Pausanias. As he conceived himself too great to remain a subject, he was willing to become a sovereign, through the assistance of Xerxes, the inveterate enemy of his country. To this prince he made application, by means of Gongylus the Eretrian, a fit instrument for any kind of villany. To such an associate Pausanias had intrusted the noble Persians taken in Byzantium. This man escaped with his prisoners across the Bosphorus, and conveyed a letter to the Great King, in which the Spartan general having mentioned, as an indubitable proof of his sincerity, the restoring his captive kinsmen, proposed to enter into strict amity with Xerxes, to take his daughter in marriage, to second his efforts in conquering Greece, and to hold that country as a dependent province of the Persian empire. The Persian is said to have highly relished these proposals, the subjugation of Greece being the great object of his reign. It is certain that he speedily sent Artabazus, a nobleman of confidence, to confer and co-operate with the traitor.

But Pausanias himself acted with the precipitancy and inconsistency of a man, who had either been deluded into treason by bad advice, or totally intoxicated by the dangerous vapours of ambition that floated in his distempered brain. Instead of dissembling his de-

* Plut. in Aristid. Thucydid. l. i. 95, & seqq. Diodor. l. xi. 44—46.

signs until they were ripe for execution, he assumed at once the tone of a master and the manners of a tyrant. He became difficult of access to his colleagues in command, disdained their advice in concerting measures which they were ordered to execute; he was surrounded by guards, chosen from the conquered Barbarians; and he punished the slightest offence in the allied troops with a rigour hitherto unknown to the Grecian discipline. He still managed, indeed, the fierce spirits of the Spartans, but without any degree of prudence, since the distinctions which he demanded for *them*, tended only to irritate and inflame their confederates, who were not allowed to forage, to draw water, to cut down straw for their beds, until the countrymen of Pausanias had been previously furnished with all these articles.

This intolerable insolence disgusted and provoked the army in general, but especially the Ionians, who lamented that they had been no sooner delivered from the shackles of Persian despotism, than they were bent under the severer and more odious yoke of Sparta. By common consent, they repaired to the Athenian Aristides, and his colleague Cimon, the son of Miltiades, a youth of the fairest hopes, who had signalized his patriotism and valour in all the glorious scenes of the war. Their designs being approved by these Athenian commanders, Uliades and Antagoras, respectively intrusted with the fleets of Samos and Chios, the bravest of all the maritime allies, seized the first opportunity to insult the galley of Pausanias: and when reproached and threatened by the Spartan, they desired him to thank Fortune, who had favoured him at Plataea, the memory of which victory alone saved him from the immediate punishment of his arrogance and cruelty. These words speedily re-echoed through the whole fleet, and served, as soon as they were heard, for the signal of general revolt. The different squadrons of Asia and the Hellespont sailed from their stations, joined the ships of Uliades and Antagoras, loudly de-

The allies
reject his
authority;
Olymp.
lxxvi. 1.
A. C. 476.

and submit
to the Athe-
nians.

clared against the insolent ambition of Pausanias, abjured the proud tyranny of Sparta, and for ever ranged themselves under the victorious colours of Athens, whose generous magnanimity seemed best fitted to command the willing obedience of freemen.*

Pausanias
recalled by
the Spar-
tans.
Olymp.
lxxvi. 2.
A. C. 475.

This revolution had immediate and important effects, which we shall proceed to explain, when we have punished and dismissed the unworthy Pausanias. Apprised of his malversation and treachery, the Spartan senate recalled him, to stand trial for his life. But his immense wealth enabling him to corrupt the integrity of his judges, he escaped without farther punishment than degradation from his office, and paying a heavy fine. In his stead, the Spartans, substituted not one admiral, but several captains, with divided authority, thereby to remove the odium and resentment which the insolence of unlimited command had excited among their confederates. Pausanias, though divested of his public character, having accompanied these officers to the Hellespont, in a vessel fitted out at his private expense, began to display more arrogance than ever. He disdained not only the manners and behaviour, but the dress and appearance of a Greek; carried on, almost openly, his treacherous correspondence with Artabazus; increased the number of his Barbarian guards and attendants; trampled with contempt on the most revered institutions of his country; and displayed that provoking pomp of power, and that offensive ostentation of vice, which disgraced the profligate lives of the Persian satraps.†

Returns to
the east;

recalled by
the scytalé;

When the Spartan magistrates received a full account of his pride and folly, they were apprehensive lest he might refuse to return home on an ordinary summons, and therefore employed the form of the scytalé, a form reserved for the most solemn occasions. The

* Nepos in Pausan. Plutarch. in Aristid.

† Thucyd. i. 95, & 128.

scytalé, (for opinion can give importance to any thing) was only a narrow scroll of parchment, which had been rolled on a piece of wood, and then stamped with the decree of the republic. Every Spartan invested with authority at home or abroad, possessed a tally exactly corresponding to the rod on which the parchment had been first rolled. By applying his tally, the words of the scytalé necessarily arranged themselves in their original form, and attested the authentic command of the magistrate. As tutor to the infant King of Sparta, Pausanias had been furnished with an instrument of this kind; and such is the effect of legal formality, that a man who would probably have despised the injunction of a simple letter, returned without delay to a country which he had betrayed, when his recall was accompanied with this frivolous, but respected ceremony.

The external professions, and hypocritical pander of Spartan virtue, were most shamefully detected and exposed in the whole affair of Pausanias. Though convicted of the most odious tyranny, extortion, and profligacy, he was still allowed to enjoy the benefit of personal freedom; to correspond by frequent messages with his accomplice Artabazus, and, at length, to tamper with the Helots and Messenians, those oppressed slaves, who were ever ready to rebel against imperious and cruel masters. But as it exceeded even the opulence and effrontery of Pausanias, to corrupt and influence the whole republic, those who had either escaped the general contagion of venality, or who were offended at not sharing his bribes, accused him, a third time, of treason to Greece, in consequence of an event which enabled them in the fullest manner to make good the charge. An unhappy youth, who lived with Pausanias as the wretched instrument of his pleasure, was destined by that monster to become the victim of his ambition. He was charged with a letter from his master to Artabazus, in which, after explaining the actual state of his affairs, Pausanias hinted to him, as had been his usual practice, to destroy the bearer. The suspicious

and punish-
ed.

youth, who had observed that none of those sent on such errands ever returned to their country, broke open the letter, and read his own fate. Fired with resentment, he instantly carried the writing to the enemies of Pausanias, who prudently advised the messenger to take refuge in the temple of Neptune, expecting that his master would soon follow him. Meanwhile they practised a concealment in the wall of the temple, and having acquainted the Ephori, and other chief magistrates, with their contrivance for convicting the traitor by his own words, they obtained a deputation to accompany them, to remain concealed with them in the temple, and to overhear the mutual reproaches between Pausanias and his messenger. Yet the superstition of the Spartans permitted them not to seize the criminal in that sacred edifice. He was allowed to retire in safety; and when the senate had at length determined to lay hold of him, he was privately admonished of his danger by some members of that venal assembly. Upon this intelligence, he took refuge in the temple of Minerva, from which it being unlawful to drag him, that asylum was surrounded by guards; all necessities were denied the prisoner, and he thus perished by hunger.*

Aristides
intrusted
with the
finances of
the confederates.
Olymp.
lxxvi. 2.
A. C. 475.

The late punishment of this detestable traitor could not repair the ruinous effects of his misconduct and villany. Not only the Ionians, who had first begun the revolt, but the foreign confederates in general, loudly rejected the pretensions of Dorcis and other captains whom the Spartans appointed to command them. A few communities of Peloponnesus still followed the Lacedæmonian standard; but the islanders and Asiatics unanimously applied to Aristides, to whose approved wisdom and virtue they not only intrusted the operations of the combined armament, but voluntarily submitted their more particular concerns: and experience soon justified their prudent choice. Pay was not yet intro-

* Thucyd. l. i. c. cxxviii. & seq. Diodor. l. xi. c. xliv. & Nepos in Pausan.

duced into the Grecian service, because the character of *soldier* was not separated from that of *citizen*. It had been usual, however, to raise annually a certain proportion of supplies among the several confederates, in order to purchase arms, to equip and victual the galleys, and to provide such engines of war as seemed requisite in storming the fortified towns belonging to the common enemy.* By unanimous suffrage, Aristides was appointed to new model and apply this necessary tax, which had been imposed and exacted by the Spartans, without sufficient attention to the respective faculties of the contributors. The honest Athenian executed this delicate office with no less judgment than equity. The whole annual imposition amounted to four hundred and sixty talents, about ninety thousand pounds sterling; which was proportioned with such nice accuracy, that no state found the smallest reason to complain of any unjust partiality. The common treasure was kept in the central and sacred island of Delos; and, though intrusted to the personal discretion of the Athenian commander, was soon conceived to lie at the disposition of his republic.†

Their amount.

While the merit of Aristides thus procured his countrymen the management of the national treasure of Greece, Themistocles was equally successful in improving the internal resources of the state.

Merit and persecution of Themistocles.

By yielding more protection to strangers than they enjoyed in neighbouring cities, he augmented not only the populousness, but the wealth of Athens, as that description of men paid an annual contribution in return for their security.‡ This, together with other branches of the revenue, he employed in building annually about sixty galleys, the addition of which to the Athenian navy abundantly compensated such losses as were sustained by the accidents of the sea in foreign parts. Notwithstanding the envy and malice of worthless dema-

* Plut. in Aristid. p. 532, and seqq.

† Ibid. p. 534. Thucyd. l. i. c. xcvi. Diodor. p. 448.

‡ Lysias adv. Philon.

gogues, who infested the Athenian assembly and courts of justice, Themistocles was fast advancing to the attainment of the same authority at home, which Aristides enjoyed abroad, when complaints arrived from Sparta, that he had conspired with Pausanias to betray the public liberty. The known resentment of the Spartans against this extraordinary man, sufficiently explains the reason why they, who were so dilatory in their proceedings against Pausanias himself, should be so eager to bring to punishment his supposed accomplice. But it is not easy to conceive, how the Athenians could admit such an accusation against a citizen, whose singular valour and conduct had gained the decisive victory at Salamis; whose counsels and address had fortified their city with impregnable strength; whose foresight and activity had procured them a fleet which no nation in the world could resist; and whose abilities and patriotism had not only saved his country from the most formidable invasion recorded in history, and which was principally directed against Athens, but amidst the terrors of this invasion, the treachery of false friends, and the violence of open enemies, had so eminently contributed to raise his republic to the first rank in the Grecian confederacy. Yet such, on the one hand, was the effect of that envy which in republics, always accompanies excellence; and such, on the other, the influence of Spartan bribery and intrigues, that Themistocles was banished by the ostracism, a punishment inflicted on men whose aspiring ambition seemed dangerous to freedom, which required not the proof of any particular delinquency, and which had effect only during a term of years.*

His death
and cha-
racter.
Olymp.
lxxvi. 4.
A. C. 473.

It is probable, that the illustrious exile would have been recalled before the expiration of the appointed time; but the persecution of Sparta allowed not his countrymen leisure to repent of their severity. Having punished Pausanias, they acquainted the Athenians, "That from the papers of this notorious traitor, complete evidence appeared of the guilt of Themistocles;

* Diodor. p. 445, and seqq. Plut. *ibid.*

that it was not sufficient, therefore, to have expelled him for a few years from Athens, by an indulgent decree which the assembly might revoke at pleasure; that crimes against the general confederacy of Greece ought to be judged by the Amphictyonic council, and punished by death, or perpetual banishment." The Athenians shamefully complied with this demand. It appeared, indeed, that Themistocles had corresponded with Pausanias, and been privy to his designs; but he persisted in affirming that he never had approved them. The rivalry and enmity subsisting between Sparta and Argos, had induced him to choose the latter as the place of his retreat. There he received the news of his condemnation; after which, not thinking himself secure in any city of Peloponnesus, he sailed to Corcyra. But his enemies still continuing to persecute him, he fled to the opposite coast of Epirus, and sought refuge among the barbarous Molossians. Soon afterwards he escaped into Persia, where his wonderful versatility of genius, in acquiring the language and manners of that country, recommended him to the new king Artaxerxes, who had lately succeeded the unfortunate invader of Greece. The suspicion of treason throws a dark shade on the eminent lustre of his abilities; nor does the disinterestedness of his private character tend to remove the imputation. Though he carried with him to Persia his most valuable effects, yet the estimate of the property which he left behind in Athens, amounted to an hundred talents (above twenty thousand pounds sterling), an immense sum, when estimated by the value of money in that age. The whole was confiscated to the exchequer; and the eagerness of the populace to seize this rich booty, serves to explain the alacrity with which all parties concurred in his destruction. A report prevailed in Greece that Themistocles could never forgive the ingratitude of the Athenians, which he had determined to revenge at the head of a powerful army, raised by Artaxerxes. But perceiving the unexampled success of Cimon on the Asiatic coast, he despaired of being able to accomplish his design; and, in a melancholy hour, ended his life by poison

Olymp.
lxxvii. 1.
A. C. 472.

at the age of sixty-five, in Magnesia, a town of Lydia, which had been bestowed on him by the liberality of the Persian monarch.*

Death of
Aristides.
Olymp.
lxxvii. 2.
A. C. 471.

It is worthy of observation, that the three great commanders who had resisted and disgraced the arms of Xerxes, quitted the scene almost at the same time. While Pausanias and Themistocles suffered the punishment of their real or pretended crimes, Aristides died of old age, universally regretted by the affectionate admiration of his country. He, who had long managed the common treasury of Greece, left not a sufficient sum to defray the expense of his funeral. His son Lysimachus received a present of three hundred pounds from the public, to enable him to pursue and finish his education. His daughters were maintained and portioned at the expense of the treasury. This honourable poverty well corresponded with the manly elevation of his character, whose pure and unsullied splendour, in the opinion of a good judge of merit,† far eclipses the doubtful fame of his dazzling, but unfortunate rival.

Elevation of
Cimon to
the com-
mand.

By the death of Aristides, the conduct of the Persian war devolved on his colleague Cimon, who united the integrity of that great man to the valour of Miltiades and the decisive boldness of Themistocles. But as he felt an ambition for eminence which disdains bare imitation, he not only reflected the most distinguished excellences of his predecessors, but improved and adorned them by an elegant liberality of manners, an indulgent humanity, and candid condescension; virtues which long secured him the affections of his fellow-citizens, while his military talents and authority, always directed by moderation and justice, maintained an absolute ascendant over the allies of the republic. His first operations were employed against the coast of Thrace, which the taking

* Plut. & Nepos in Themist. Diodor. l. xi. c. liv—lix. Thucyd. i. 135, & seq.

† Plato apud Plutarch. in Aristid.

of Byzantium seemed to render an easy conquest. The only places in that country fitted to make an obstinate resistance were the towns of Eion and Amphipolis, both situate on the river Strymon; the former near its junction with the Strymonic gulf, the latter more remote from the shore, but entirely surrounded by an arm of the gulf, and the principal branches of that copious river. Amphipolis, however, was taken, and planted by a numerous colony of Athenians. But Eion still opposed a vigorous resistance; Boges the Persian governor, having determined rather to perish than surrender. After long baffling the efforts of the besiegers, by such persevering courage and activity as none of his countrymen had displayed in the course of the war, this fierce Barbarian was at length not tamed, but exasperated by hunger. His companions and attendants, equally desperate with their leader, followed his intrepid example; and mounting the ramparts with one accord, threw into the middle stream of the Strymon their gold, silver, and other precious effects. After thus attesting their implacable hatred to the assailants, they calmly descended, lighted a funeral pile, butchered their wives and children, and again mounting the walls, precipitated themselves with fury into the thickest of the flames.*

With this signal act of despair ended the Persian dominion over the coast of Europe, which finally submitted to the victorious arms of Cimon; a general, who knew alike how to conquer and how to use the victory. The Athenians were eager to prolong the authority of a man, who seemed ambitious to acquire wealth by valour, only that by wealth he might purchase the public esteem; and whose affable kindness, and winning liberality, continually increased his fame and his influence both at home and abroad. The reinforcements with which he was speedily furnished by the republic, enabled him to pursue the enemy into Asia, without allowing them time to

Thrace.
Olymp.
lxxvii. 2.
A. C. 471.

Pursues the
enemy into
Asia.
Olymp.
lxxvii. 3.
A. C. 470.

* Plut. in Cimon. Diodor. l. xi.

breathe, or recover strength, after their repeated defeats. The intermediate islands ambitiously courted his protection and friendship; and *their* feeble aid, together with the more powerful assistance of the Ionian coast, speedily increased his fleet to the number of three hundred sail.

His rapid
success in
Caria and
Lycia.

With this formidable armament he stretched towards the coast of Caria, where his approach served for the signal of liberty to the numerous Greek cities in that rich province. Seconded by the ardour of the natives, he successively besieged and reduced the walled towns and fortresses, several of which were defended with powerful garrisons; and, in the course of a few months, totally expelled the Persians from all their strong holds in Caria. The victorious armament then proceeded eastward to Lycia, and received the submission of that valuable coast.

He takes
Phaselis.

The citizens of Phaselis alone, defended by strong walls, and a numerous garrison, refused to admit the Grecian fleet, or to betray their Persian master. Their resistance was the more formidable, because their ancient connexion with the Chians, who actually served under the colours of Cimon, enabled them to enter into a treacherous correspondence with the enemy. After other means of intercourse had been cut off, the Chians still shot arrows over the walls, and thus conveyed intelligence into the place of all the measures adopted by the assailants. Wherever the attack was made, the townsmen and garrison were prepared to resist; the besiegers were long baffled in all their attempts; but the perseverance of Cimon finally overcame the obstinacy of his enemies. Their vigorous resistance was not distinguished by any memorable punishment; the mediation of the Chians, who were justly esteemed among the best sailors in the Athenian fleet, easily prevailing on the lenity of Cimon to grant them a capitulation, on condition that they immediately paid ten talents, and augmented the Grecian armament by their whole naval strength.*

* Plut. & Diodor. *ibid.*

The distracted state of Persia, the intrigues of the court, the discord of the palace, and the civil wars which raised to the throne of Xerxes his third son Artaxerxes, distinguished by the epithet of Longimanus, prevented that vast but unwieldy empire from making any vigorous effort to resist the European invasion. But after Artaxerxes had at length crushed the unfortunate ambition of his competitors, and acquired firm possession of the reins of government, which he continued to hold for half a century,* he naturally concerted proper measures to defend his remaining dominions in Asia Minor. Having re-established the Persian authority in the isle of Cyprus, he considered that Pamphylia, being the next province to Lycia, would probably receive a speedy visit from the victorious Greeks. That he might meet them there with becoming vigour, he assembled a powerful army on the fertile banks of the Eurymedon. A fleet likewise, of four hundred sail, was collected, chiefly from Cilicia and Phœnicia, and was commanded to rendezvous near the mouth of that river.

The Persians prepare for defence.

A. C. 4—425.

The Greeks, conducted by the activity of Cimon, delayed not to undertake the enterprise which the prudence of Artaxerxes had foreseen. Their fleet, amounting to two hundred and fifty galleys, fell in with the Persian squadrons off the coast of Cyprus. The Barbarians, vainly confident in their superior numbers, did not decline the engagement, which was obstinate, fierce, and bloody. Many of their ships were sunk; an hundred were taken; the rest fled in disorder towards the shore of Cyprus; but, being speedily pursued by a powerful detachment of the Grecian fleet, were abandoned by the terror of their crews, to the victors; and thus the mighty preparations, which the Great King had raised with such flattering

Are defeated at sea. Olymp. lxxvii. 3. A. C. 470.

* Compare Thucyd. l. i. c. cxxxvii. and Usher Chronol. See also Petav. de Doctrin. Templ. l. x. c. xxv. who endeavours to reconcile the chronological differences between Thucydides and Plutarch in Themist.

hopes, strengthened in one day, with about three hundred sail, the hostile navy of Greece.*

Cimon's valour and conduct.

The vigorous mind of Cimon, instead of being intoxicated with this flow of prosperity, was less elevated with good fortune, than solicitous to improve it. The captured vessels contained above twenty thousand Persians. The soldiers encamped on the Eurymedon were still ignorant of the sea-fight. These circumstances instantly suggested to the quick discernment of Cimon a stratagem for surprising the Persian camp, which was executed on the evening of the same glorious day with admirable success. The prisoners were stripped of their eastern attire; the bravest of the Greeks condescended to assume the tiara and scimitar, and thus disguised, embarked in the Persian ships, and sailed up the river Eurymedon with a favourable gale. The unsuspecting Barbarians received them with open arms into their camp, as their long-expected companions. But the Greeks had no sooner been admitted within the gates, than on a given signal, at once drawing their swords, they attacked, with the concert of disciplined valour, the defenceless security of their now astonished and trembling adversaries. Before

Gains the decisive victory of Eurymedon.

the Persians recovered from their surprise, Cimon had advanced to the tent of their general. Consternation and despair seized this numerous but unwarlike host. The few who were least overcome by the impressions of fear and amazement, betook themselves to flight; a panic terror suspended the powers of the rest; they remained, and fell, unarmed and unresisting, by the hands of an unknown enemy.

The spoil, how employed.

The rich spoils of the Barbarian camp, rewarded the enterprise and celerity of the Greeks, who, loaded with wealth and glory, returned home during winter, and piously dedicated to Apollo a tenth of the plunder acquired by these ever memorable achievements. A considerable portion of the remainder was employed (as

* Thucydid. Plut. Diodor. ibid.

mentioned above) in strengthening the fortifications of Athens. Agreeably to the Grecian custom, the general was entitled to a valuable share. Cimon received it as a testimony of the public esteem, and expended it for the public use: embellishing Athens his beloved birth-place with shady walks, gardens, porticos, schools of exercise, and other works of general pleasure and utility.*

After these decisive victories, the Greeks, headed by the Athenians, carried on the war during twenty-one years, rather for plunder than glory. The manifest superiority which they enjoyed on all the eastern shores of the Mediterranean, might have rendered their maritime allies sufficiently secure. But the people of Athens, whose councils began about this time to be governed by the magnanimous ambition and profound policy of Pericles, had the address to persuade their confederates that naval preparations and enterprises were still as necessary as ever. At length, however, most of those scattered islands and sea-ports, which ranged under the colours of Athens, grew weary of perpetual hostilities, of which *they* shared the toil and the danger, while their lofty leaders alone reaped the advantage and the glory, and became continually more anxious to enjoy the benefits of public peace, and the undisturbed comforts of domestic tranquillity. The Athenians availed themselves of this disposition, to engage such states as appeared most backward in raising their contingents for the common armament, to compound for personal service on shipboard, by an annual supply of money, which might enable Athens continually to keep in readiness a fleet of observation, to watch and check the motions of the common enemy. This, at first voluntary, contribution soon amounted to the value of an hundred thousand pounds. It was gradually augmented; and, at length, raised by Pericles to three times the original sum;† an immense income, considering that the proportional value

The Athenians prosecute the war; Olymp. lxxvii. 4. A. C. 469.

take money instead of ships from their allies;

* Idem, *ibid.* & Nepos in Cimon. & Thucyd. l. i.

† Thucyd. *ibid.* & Plut. in Pericl.

of money to labour was then ten times higher than at present; and considering also the very limited revenues of the greatest monarchs of antiquity; since, from all the various provinces of the Persian empire, scarcely four millions sterling entered the royal treasury.*

prepare to
undertake
an expedition
against
Cyprus.
Olymp.
lxxvii. 3.
A. C. 466.

In their eastern expeditions, the Greeks had an opportunity of visiting the large and beautiful island of Cyprus, which, though delivered by their valour from *some* Persian garrisons, either still continued, or again became, subject to that empire. The striking advantages† of a delightful territory, four hundred miles in circumference, producing in great abundance wine, oil, with the most delicious fruits, and deemed invaluable in ancient times on account of its rich mines of brass, naturally tempted the ambition of an enterprising nation. The conquest of Cyprus was still farther recommended to the Athenians, as the sea-coast had been peopled by a Grecian colony under the heroic Teucer, who built there a city called Salamis from the name of his native country,‡ which, from the earliest antiquity, had been regarded as a dependence of Attica. The Grecian inhabitants of Cyprus had hitherto attained neither power nor splendour; their settlements had been successively reduced by the Phœnicians and the Great King; and they actually languished in a condition of debility which threatened their total ruin.|| Honour prompted the Athenians to relieve their distressed brethren; interest incited them to acquire possession of a valuable island. With two hundred ships of war they prepared to undertake this important enterprise, when an object still more dazzling gave a new direction to their arms.

Diverted
from that
measure by
the revolt

Amidst the troubles which attended the establishment of Artaxerxes on the Persian throne, the Egyptians sought an opportunity to withdraw

* Herodot. iii. 95. In modern times the precious metals have so much increased in quantity and diminished in value, that in 1660 the revenue of Hindoostan amounted to thirty-two millions sterling.

† Strabo, p. 648.

‡ Isocrat. in Evagor.

§ Isocrat. *ibid.*

themselves from the yoke of a nation whose tyranny they had long felt and lamented. A leader only was wanting to head the rebellion. This also was at length discovered in Inarus, a bold Lybian chief, to whose standard the malcontents assembling from all quarters, gradually grew into an army, which attacked and defeated the Persian mercenaries, expelled the garrisons, banished or put to death the governors and officers of the revenue, and traversing the kingdom without control or resistance, every where proclaimed the Egyptians a free and independent nation. Nor was this the capricious revolt of short-sighted Barbarians. Inarus maintained his conquest with valour and policy; and in order to strengthen his interest by foreign alliance, despatched an embassy to Athens, craving the assistance of that victorious republic against its most odious and inveterate enemy.*

The negotiation was successful; the Athenians burned with desire to share the spoils of Persia, and commanded the ships, destined for Cyprus, to sail to Egypt. They had scarcely arrived in that kingdom when a Persian army of three hundred thousand men, commanded by Achæmenes, encamped on the banks of the Nile. A battle speedily ensued, in which the insurgents obtained a complete victory, chiefly through the valour and discipline of their Grecian auxiliaries. The vanquished sought refuge within the walls of Memphis; that capital was invested; and after becoming masters of two divisions of the city, the Athenians pushed with vigour the siege of the third, called, from the colour of its fortifications, the White Wall. Artaxerxes, meanwhile, neglected no possible effort for breaking, or eluding, a tempest, that threatened to dismember his dominions. While Persian nobles of distinction conveyed immense sums of gold and silver into Greece, to rouse, by seasonable bribes, the hostility of rival states against the

of Egypt.
Olymp.
lxxviii. 4.
A. C. 465.

The Athenian armament sails thither;
Olymp.
lxxix. 2.
A. C. 463.

is victorious;

besieges
Memphis.

* Thucyd. l. i. & Diodor. lxi. p. 279.

audacity of Athens, a new army was collected, still more numerous than the former, and intrusted to Megabazus, the bravest general in the East. Such, at least, he was deemed by his countrymen; yet we cannot perceive any very illustrious merit in forcing the Greeks to raise the siege of Memphis, the soldiers being already worn out by the fatigues of hard service, and probably enfeebled by diseases in a far distant climate, much differing from their own.

Misfortunes
of the Athe-
nians in
Egypt.
Olymp.
lxxx. 4.
A. C. 467.

Megabazus, however, had the glory of first turning against the Greeks that current of success which had run for many years so strongly in their favour. They and the revolted Egyptians were now besieged, in their turn, in a small island of the Nile called Prosopis, along the coast of which the Athenians had anchored their ships. By diverting the course of the river, Megabazus left them on dry land. The operation so much confounded the Egyptians that they immediately laid down their arms: but their wonted magnanimity did not forsake the Greeks; with their own hands they set fire to their fleet, and exhorting each other to suffer nothing unworthy of their former fame, determined with one accord, to resist the assailants, and, although they could not expect victory, to purchase an honourable tomb. Megabazus, intimidated by their countenance and resolution, and unwilling to expose his men to the efforts of a dangerous despair, granted them a capitulation, and what seems more extraordinary in a Persian commander, allowed them to retire in safety. They endeavoured to penetrate through Lybia to the Grecian colonies in Cyrenaica, from which they hoped to be transported by sea to their native country. But the greater part perished through fatigue or disease in the inhospitable deserts of Africa, and only a miserable remnant of men, whose memory deserved a better fate, revisited the shores of Greece. To complete the disaster, a reinforcement of sixty ships, which the Athenians had sent to Egypt, was attacked, surrounded, and totally destroyed by the Phœnicians.*

* Isocrat. de Pace & Panegyri. & Thucyd. & Diodor. *ibid.*

These repeated misfortunes, together with the growing troubles in Greece, which we shall speedily have occasion to describe, prevented the Athenians, during seven years, from resuming their design against Cyprus. A fleet of two hundred sail was at length intrusted to Cimon, who enjoyed a prosperous voyage to the Cyprian coast.

The Athenians renew their designs against Cyprus. Olymp. lxxxii. 3. A. C. 450.

The towns of Malos and Citium opposed a feeble resistance, and the singular humanity with which Cimon treated his prisoners, would have facilitated more important conquests: but the Phœnician and Sicilian fleets had again put to sea, and Cimon wisely determined to attack them as they approached the island, rather than wait their arrival, his countrymen being superior to their enemies, still more in naval than in military prowess. In the battle which soon followed, he took above an hundred galleys; the number of those sunk or destroyed is unknown; the remainder fled to the coast of Cilicia, in hopes of protection from the great army of Megabazus, encamped in that province; but this slow unwieldy body was unable to afford them any seasonable or effectual relief. The Greeks, having pursued them on shore, totally destroyed *them*, as well as the Persian detachments which came to their succour, and returned loaded with spoil to Cyprus. The Athenian general then prepared to form the siege of Salamis, which, though defended by a numerous Persian garrison, and well provided with all the necessaries of defence, must have soon yielded to his skill and valour, had not sickness, in consequence of a wound received before the walls of Citium, prevented him from exerting his usual activity.

Their success in that island.

Meanwhile Artaxerxes, who perceived that the acquisition of Salamis would naturally draw after it the conquest of the whole island, and who had been continually disappointed in expecting to prepare fleets and armies able to contend with the Athenians, eagerly solicited peace from that people, almost on their own terms. His ambassadors

The Persian monarch solicits peace. Olymp. lxxxiii. 4. A. C. 449.

Motives which de-

terminated
the Athenians to
compliance.

were favourably heard in the Athenian assembly by those who were more solicitous about confirming their usurpations over their allies and colonies, than ambitious of extending their Asiatic conquests. Cimon who invariably maintained the contrary system, was now no more. A peace, therefore, was concluded on the following conditions: * “That all the Greek colonies in Lower Asia should be declared independent of the Persian empire; that the armies of the Great King should not approach within three days’ journey of the western coast; and that no Persian vessel should appear between the Cyanean rocks and the Chelidonian isles, that is, in the wide extent of the Ægean and Mediterranean seas, between the northern extremity of the Thracian Bosphorus and the south-eastern promontory of Lycia. On such terms the Athenians and their allies stipulated to withdraw their armament from Cyprus, and to abstain thenceforward from molesting the territories of the king of Persia.† Such was the conclusion of this memorable war, which, since the burning of Sardis, the first decisive act of hostility, had been carried on, with little intermission, during fifty-one years. The same magnanimous republic, which first ventured to oppose the pretensions of Persia, dictated to that haughty empire the most humiliating conditions of peace; an important and illustrious æra in Grecian history, which was often celebrated with pompous panegyric during the declining ages of Athenian glory.

Obstacles to
a general or
lasting confederacy in
Greece.

Although, for reasons which will be explained hereafter, peace was alike necessary to both parties, yet the reader, who feels a warm interest in the cause of civilization and humanity, cannot but regret that, after disgracing the arms of Persia, and breaking the power of Carthage, the Greeks had not combined in one powerful exertion, and extended their victories and their improvements over the ancient world. But the internal defects in her political constitution, which stunted

* Thucyd. Plutarch. Diodor. Isocrat. &c.

† Isocrat. Panegyric.

the growth of Greece, and prevented her manhood and maturity from corresponding to the blooming vigour of her youth, rendered impossible this most desirable union, which, could it have taken place, would probably have left little room for the brilliant conquests of Alexander, or the more permanent glory of the Roman arms. Instead of these imagined trophies, the subsequent history of Greece exhibits a melancholy picture of intestine discord.

During an hundred and eleven years, which elapsed between the glorious peace with Persia, in which the Athenians, at the head of their allies, seemed for ever to have repressed the ambition of that aspiring power, and the fatal defeat at Cheronæa, in which the same people, with their unfortunate auxiliaries, submitted to the valour and activity of Philip, Greece, with short variations of domestic quiet, and foreign hostility, carried on bloody wars, and obtained destructive victories, in which her own citizens, not the enemies of the confederacy, were the unhappy objects of her inglorious triumph. Yet the transactions of this distracted and miserable period, however immaterial in the history of empire, are peculiarly interesting in the still more instructive history of human nature. A confederacy of soldiers and freemen, extending their dominion over ignorant savages, or effeminate slaves, must continually exhibit the unequal combat of power, courage, and conduct on the one side, against weakness, ignorance, and timidity on the other. But amidst the domestic dissensions of Greece, the advantages of the contending parties were nicely balanced and accurately adjusted. Force was resisted by force, valour opposed by valour, and art encountered or eluded by similar address. The active powers of man, excited by emulation, inflamed by opposition, nourished by interest, and at once strengthened and elevated by a sense of personal honour and the hope of immortal fame, operated in every direction with awakened energy, and were displayed in the boldest exertions of the voice and arm. In every field where glory might be won, men recognised the proper objects of their ambition, and

Its subsequent history peculiarly interesting.

aspired to the highest honours of their kind ; and although the prizes were often small, and the victory always indecisive, yet the pertinacious efforts of the combatants (great beyond example, and almost beyond belief) furnish the most interesting spectacle that history can present to the rational wonder of posterity.

Sparta,
Thebes,
and Argos
hostile to
Athens.

The powerful cities of Sparta, Thebes, and Argos, which had long rivalled Athens and each other, could not behold, without much dissatisfaction and anxiety, the rapid growth of a republic which already eclipsed their splendour, and might sometime endanger their safety. The Spartans had particular causes of disgust. The glorious victories of Cimon made them deeply regret that *they*, who had shared the first and severest toils of the war, had too hastily withdrawn from a field of action that afforded so many laurels. They were provoked at being denied the command of the maritime allies, and not less offended at being overreached by Themistocles. All these reasons, had determined them, above twenty years before the peace with Persia, to make war on the Athenians, expecting to be seconded in this design by the fears of the weak, and the jealousy of the more powerful, states, on both sides the Corinthian isthmus. But their animosity, before it broke out into action, was diverted by a calamity equally sudden and unforeseen. In the year four hundred and sixty-nine before Christ, Sparta was overwhelmed by an earthquake.*

Earthquake
in Sparta;
Olymp.
lxxvii. 4.
A. C. 469.

Taygetus and the neighbouring mountains were shaken to the foundation, and twenty thousand Lacedæmonian citizens or subjects perished in this dreadful disaster. But, amidst the ruins of Sparta, one description of men beheld the public misfortunes not only without sympathy, but with a secret satisfaction.

The oppressed Spartan slaves, known by the appellations of Helots and Messenians, assembled in crowds from the villages in which they were

followed by
the revolt of
the Helots

* Thucyd. lib. i. cap. c. & seq. Diodor. lib. xi. cap. lxxii.

cantoned, and took measures for delivering themselves during the cruelty of the elements, from the not less inexorable cruelty of their unfeeling tyrants. The prudent dispositions of King Archidamus, who, foreseeing the revolt, had summoned the citizens to arms, prevented them from getting immediate possession of the capital; but they rendered themselves masters of the ancient and strong fortress Ithomé, from which they continued many years to infest the Lacedæmonian territories. The Spartans in vain exerted their utmost endeavours to expel this dangerous intestine enemy; and in the third year of the war (for this revolt is dignified in History by the name of the Third Messenian War,) they had recourse to the Athenians, who, of all the Greeks, were deemed the most skilful in sieges. The Athenians, either not sufficiently acquainted with the secret hostility of Sparta, or willing to dissemble their knowledge of it, as they were then totally bent on other projects and enterprises, sent them the required assistance. The besiegers, however, met with so little success, that the Spartans dismissed their Athenian auxiliaries, on pretence indeed that their help was no longer necessary; but, in reality, from a suspicion that they favoured the interest of the rebels; and, as they retained the troops of all the other allies, the Athenians were justly provoked by this instance of distrust.* Meanwhile the inhabitants of Pisa, who, for a reason that will be immediately explained, were highly incensed against Sparta, gave vigorous assistance to the besieged.

The place thus held out ten years: many sallies were made, several battles were fought with the fury that might be expected from the cruelty of tyrants chastising the insolence of slaves. Both parties must have been reduced to extremity, since the Helots and Messenians, though obliged to surrender the place, obtained from the weakness, a condition which they would have vainly solicited from the

and Messenians;

part of whom are settled in Naupactus by the Athenians. Olymp. lxxx. 2. A. C. 459.

* Thucyd. l. i. cap. ci.

mercy, of Sparta, "that they should be allowed, with their wives, children, and effects, to depart, unmolested, from the Peloponnesus." The Athenians deeply resenting the affront of suspected fidelity, determined to mortify the Spartans by kindly receiving these needy fugitives, whom they finally established in Naupactus, a seaport on the Crissean gulf, which their arms had recently wrested from the Locri Ozolæ, a cruel, barbarous people, whose savage manners and rapacity

disgraced their Grecian extraction. The Helots and Messenians repaid, by signal gratitude, the humane protection of Athens. During the long course of the Peloponnesian war, while their neighbours on every side espoused the opposite interest, the inhabitants of Naupactus alone invariably exerted themselves, with zeal and vigour, in defence of the declining power of their magnanimous confederate and ancient benefactor.

The cause above alluded to, which had incensed the Pisans against Sparta, dated beyond a century.* That people had long contended with Elis, the capital of their province, for the right of superintending the Olympic games. The Spartans enabled the Eleans to prevail in the contest, who continued without opposition to direct that august solemnity, until the earthquake and subsequent calamities of Sparta emboldened the insolent and wealthy Pisans to renew their pretensions.† Their attempts, however, to maintain this bold claim, especially after the removal of the Helots and Messenians, appear to have been

alike feeble and unfortunate. Pisa was taken, plundered, and so thoroughly demolished that not a vestige, and scarcely the name, remained.

With the valuable booty acquired in this warfare, the Eleans executed a memorable undertaking; having in the course of ten years,‡ enlarged and adorned the temple of Olympian Jupiter, and erected the cele-

Their signal gratitude.

The war between the Elians and Pisans.

Sack of Pisa.
Olymp. lxxi. 1.

A. C. 456.
The temple of Olympian Jupiter.

* Pausanias, l. vi. c. xxii.

† Strabo, l. viii. p. 545.

‡ Between the years 456 and 446, A. C.

brated statue of that divinity; a work which no subsequent age could ever rival, and whose sublimity is said to have increased and fortified the popular superstition.* This famous temple was of the Doric order, encircled with a colonnade, and built of the stone of the country resembling Parian marble. From the area, or ground, to the decoration over the gate, it reached sixty-eight feet in height; it was ninety-five feet broad, and two hundred and thirty long: thus falling short of the greatest modern temples in magnitude, as much as it exceeded them in beauty and richness of material. It was covered with Pentelican marble, cut in the form of brick tiles. At each extremity of the roof stood a gilded vase: in the middle a golden victory; below which was a shield embossed with a Medusa's head, likewise of gold. Pelops and Oenomaus were represented, on the pediment, ready to begin the chariot race before very illustrious spectators, since Jupiter himself was of the number. The vault was adorned with the battle of the Centaurs and Lapithæ. The labours of Hercules distinguished the principal entrance.†

After passing the brass gates, you discovered Iphitus crowned by his spouse‡ Echecheiria; from thence you proceeded, through a noble portico, to the majestic creation of Phidias the Athenian, which formed the principal ornament of the temple, and of Greece. The god was sitting on a throne, and being sixty feet high, touched the roof with his head; and threatened, if he raised himself, to shake in pieces that noble edifice, which, lofty and spacious as it was, still appeared unworthy to contain him. This vast colossus was composed of gold, taken in the sack of Pisa, and of ivory, then almost as precious as gold, which was brought from the East by Athenian merchantmen.

Phidias' statue of that divinity.

* Aliquid receptæ religioni adjecisse fertur. FLIN.

† Pausan. in Eliac. p. 303. & seqq.

‡ Γυνή means a married woman: perhaps Echecheiria, *war-ceasing*, was an allegorical personage; but Greek names denoting qualities or functions, were often imposed, as we have seen, on real persons.

The god had an enamelled crown of olive on his head, an image of victory in his right hand, a burnished sceptre in his left. His robes and sandals were variegated with golden flowers and animals. The throne was made of ivory and ebony, inlaid with precious stones. The feet which supported it as well as the fillets which joined them, were adorned with innumerable figures; among which you perceived the Theban children torn by sphinxes, together with Apollo and Diana wreaking revenge on the beautiful and once flourishing family of Niobé. Upon the most conspicuous part of the throne which met the eye in entering, you beheld eight statues, representing the gymnastic exercises; and the beautiful figure, whose head was encircled with a wreath, resembled young Pantarces, the favourite scholar of Phidias, who in the contest of boys, had recently gained the Olympic prize. Besides the four feet, mentioned above, the throne was supported by four pillars, placed between them, and painted by Panæus, the brother of Phidias. There that admirable artist had delineated the Hesperides guarding the golden apples: Atlas painfully sustaining the heavens, with Hercules ready to assist him; Salamine with naval ornaments in her hand; and Achilles supporting the beautiful expiring Penthesilea.

The Olympic temple compared with other sacred edifices in Greece.

It would be tedious to describe the remaining ornaments of this celebrated statue, and still more of the sacred edifice itself: yet the temple of Olympia was much inferior in size to that of Ceres and Proserpine, at Eleuses, in Attica. The latter was built by Ictinus, the contemporary and rival of Phidias; and sufficiently capacious, we are told, to contain thirty thousand persons.* This edifice was also of the Doric order; that of Diana at Ephesus, and of Apollo at Miletus, were both of the Ionic; and the celebrated temple of Jupiter at Athens, begun by Pisistratus, and enlarged by Pericles, was finished in the Corinthian style, by Antiochus Epiphanes, king of Syria. These four temples were the richest and most beauti-

* Strabo, l. ix. p. 395.

ful in the world, and long regarded as models of the three Grecian orders of architecture.*

While the earthquake and the servile war confined within a domestic sphere the activity of Sparta, Argos, the second republic of the Peloponnesus, and long the most considerable principality in that peninsula, underwent such revolutions and misfortunes, as left her neither inclination nor power to oppose the Athenian greatness. Ever rivals and enemies of Sparta, the Argives had jealously declined the danger and glory of the Persian war, to the success of which their adversaries had so eminently contributed. This ungenerous dereliction passed not unpunished. As deserters of the common cause, the Argives incurred the hatred and contempt of their public-spirited neighbours. Mycenæ, once the proud residence of royal Agamemnon, Epidaurus and Træzené, which formed respectively the greatest strength and brightest ornament of the Argive territory, threw off the yoke of a capital, whose folly or baseness rendered her unworthy to govern them. Sicyon, Nauplia, Heliæa, and other towns of less note, which were scattered at small distances over the face of that delightful province, obeyed the summons to liberty, and assumed independence. The rebels (for as such they were treated by the indignant magistrates of Argos) strengthened themselves by foreign alliance, and continued thenceforth to disdain the authority of their ancient metropolis and sovereign. At the commencement of the Peloponnesian war, they formed a respectable portion of the Lacedæmonian confederacy; while Argos alone, of all the cities in the Peloponnesus, openly espoused the cause of the Athenians.

Intestine
dissensions
in Argolis.
Olymp.
lxxviii. 1.
A. C. 468.

The ancient city of Mycenæ, which had first sounded the trumpet of sedition, was the only victim of Argive resentment. The Argives seized a favourable opportunity, while the allies and adherents of Mycenæ were occupied with their domestic concerns, to lead their whole

Destruction
of Mycenæ.

* Vitruvius, l. vii.

forces against the place ; and having taken it by storm, they decimated the inhabitants, and demolished not only the walls, but the town* itself, which was never afterwards rebuilt.

The inferior cities in Bœotia reject the authority of Thebes.

The desultory transactions of so many states and cities as composed the name and nation of Greece, must appear a continual maze of perplexity and confusion, unless we carefully follow the threads which should direct us in this intricate, yet not inextricable, labyrinth. But if we seriously apply ourselves to investigate the hidden causes of events, and to trace revolutions to their source, we shall be surprised by the agreeable discovery, that the history of this celebrated people is not entirely that mass of disorder which it appears on a superficial survey. The same causes which repressed the activity, and humbled the pride of Argos, operated alike fatally on Thebes, the second republic beyond the isthmus, and the only one that ever aspired to rival the power of Athens. The Thebans, for similar, or more odious reasons, than those which had restrained the Argives, had also withheld their assistance in the Persian war ; and by this mean selfishness or treachery had justly provoked the indignation of the subordinate cities of Bœotia. Not only Thespiæ and Plataea, which had ever borne with impatience the Theban yoke, but the sea-ports of Aulis, Anthemon, and Larymna ; Aschra, the beloved habitation of old Hesiod ; Coronea, overshadowed by mount Helicon, a favourite seat of the muses ; Lebadea, famous for its oracle of Trophonius ; Delium and Alalkomené, respectively sacred to Apollo and Minerva, together with Leuctra and Chæronæa, the destined scenes of immortal victories ; all these cities successively rejected the jurisdiction and sovereignty of Thebes, which, during the invasion of Xerxes, had so shamefully betrayed the common interest and thwarted the general impulse of the nation.†

* Diodor. l. xi. p. 276.

† Diodor. l. xi. p. 283, and seqq. and Thucydid. l. i. p. 273.

During several years, the Thebans patiently yielded to a storm, which they found it impossible to resist. But when the Spartans began to breathe after the recovery of Ithomé, and had made a successful expedition against the Phocians, in defence of their kinsmen in Doris, the Thebans warmly solicited them to take part in their domestic quarrels, and to enable them to regain their ascendant in Bœotia; with assurance that they would employ the first moments of returning vigour to oppose the growing pretensions of the Athenians. This proposal was accepted, not only by the resentment, but by the policy of the Spartan senate, who perceived that it equally concerned their interest, that the neighbouring city of Argos should lose her jurisdiction over Argolis; and that Thebes, the neighbour and rival of Athens, should recover her authority in Bœotia.

The Thebans obtain assistance from Sparta. Olymp. lxxx. 2. A. C. 459.

Wise policy of that state.

They were applying themselves with vigour and success to effect this salutary purpose, when the active vigilance of Athens despatched an army, fifteen thousand strong, to maintain the independence of Bœotia. The valour and conduct of Myronides, the Athenian general, obtained a decisive victory near the walls of Tanagra, one of the few places in the province which had preserved its fidelity to the capital. This memorable battle, which no ancient writer has thought proper to describe, although it is compared to the glorious trophies of Marathon and Platea,* confirmed the liberty of Bœotia; nor could the Thebans, notwithstanding their partial success against several of the revolted cities, recover their authority in that province, until, about fourscore years afterwards, they emerged into sudden splendour under the conduct of their heroic Epaminondas.

Athens enables the Bœotians to maintain their independence. A. C. 458 —456.

The ambitious policy of Pericles, which will be fully explained in the sequel, was eager to profit by every favourable turn of fortune. He took care

Ambitious measures of Athens.

* Diodor. l. xi. p. 284.

to place Athenian garrisons in several Bœotian fortresses; he made the neighbouring republics of Corinth and Megara

feel and acknowledge the supremacy of Athens;
A. C. 455.

and after sending Tolmidas, a commander endowed rather with an impetuous than well-regulated courage, to

ravage the coast of the Peloponnesus, he sailed
A. C. 454.

thither next year in person, and made the Lacedæmonians and their allies deeply regret, that they had too soon discovered their animosity against a republic, alike able to protect its friends and take vengeance on its enemies. The measures of this daring leader were actually uncontrolled by any opposition, since his eloquence had prevailed over the innocence and merit of Cimon; and procured the banishment of that illustrious commander. But Cimon was recalled in two years; and his return was signalized by a suspension of arms in Greece, which that real patriot had been as zealous to promote, as he was ambitious to pursue his Asiatic triumphs.

This treaty, however, was soon broken; but an
A. C. 447.

ill-concerted and unfortunate enterprise against Thebes (disapproved by Pericles himself,) in which the rash Tolmidas lost his army and his life, made the Athenians again

listen to terms of accommodation. They agreed to
A. C. 445.

withdraw their garrisons from Bœotia; to disavow all pretensions against Corinth and Megara, pretensions which had no other effect than to exasperate those little republics against their usurping neighbour; and, on complying with these conditions, the Athenians recovered their citizens made captive in Bœotia, through the misconduct of Tolmidas.*

This was the famous truce of thirty years concluded in the fourteenth year preceding the Peloponnesian war. The former treaty had been limited to a much shorter period; for it is worthy of observation, that even in their agreements of peace, the Greeks discovered that perpetual propensity to war, which was the unhappy effect of their political institutions.†

The truce
of thirty
years.
Olymp.
lxxxiii. 4.
A. C. 445.

* Diodor. l. xii. p. 293. Thucydid. l. i. p. 71. & seqq. † Idem. p. 74.

The terms of this accommodation, seemingly little favourable to the interest of Athens, were dictated, however, rather by the ambition than the equity of that republic; a conclusion that evidently results from examining the third series of events, which (as observed above) completes the history of this memorable period. Amidst the foreign expeditions of Cimon, and the domestic dissensions of Greece, the Athenian arms and policy had been gradually, during thirty years, establishing the sovereignty of the republic over her distant colonies and confederates. This bold undertaking was finally accomplished by Pericles, whose character contributed, more than that of any one man, to the glory and greatness, as well as to the calamities and ruin, of his country.

Motives of the Athenians for granting it.

Between the years 470 and 440, A. C.

His father Xanthippus, who gained the illustrious victory at Mycalé, rejoiced in a son endued with the happiest natural talents, and an innate love of glory. His youth was intrusted to the learned and virtuous Damon, who concealed, under the uninvincible title of master of rhetoric, the art of animating his pupil with an ambition to deserve the first rank in the republic, as well as of adorning him with the accomplishments most necessary to attain it. From Aristagoras of Clazomené, denominated the philosopher of mind, on account of his continual solicitude to confirm the most important and most pleasing of all doctrines, that a benevolent intelligence presides over the operations of nature, and the events of human life, Pericles early learned to control the tempest of youthful passions, which so often blast the promising hopes of manhood; to preserve an unshaken constancy in all the vicissitudes of fortune, since all are the varied dispensations of the same wise providence; and to trample, with generous contempt, on the grovelling superstition of the vulgar. Thus qualified by nature and education, he soon displayed, in the Athenian assembly, an eloquence, nourished by the copious spring of philosophy, and ennobled by the manly elevation of his character. His speeches consisted not in the

Character of Pericles.

unpremeditated effusions of a temporary enthusiasm ; he was the first of his countrymen, who, before pronouncing his discourses, committed them to writing :* they were studied and composed with the most laborious and patient care ; and being polished by repeated touches of improving art, they rose in admiration in proportion as they were more closely examined by the piercing eye of criticism ; and acquired the epithet of Olympian, to express that permanent and steady lustre which they reflected.†

Pericles is
suspected
of usurpa-
tion ;

But the superior talents of Pericles, which, in a well regulated government, would have increased his influence, had well nigh occasioned his ruin in a turbulent and suspicious democracy. The memory of the oldest citizens faithfully recollected, and the envy or fears of the younger readily believed, that the figure, the countenance, and the voice of the young orator, strongly resembled those of the ambitious and artful Pisistratus, whose specious virtues had subverted the liberty of his country. The alarmed jealousy of freedom, which often destroyed, in an hour, the authority established slowly, and with much labour, during many meritorious years, might be tempted to punish the anticipated tyranny of Pericles ; who, to escape the disgrace of the ostracism, shunned the dangerous admiration of the assembly.

he courts
and cor-
rupts the
Athenian
populace ;

The active vigour of his mind thus withdrawn from politics, was totally directed to war ; and his abilities, alike fitted to excel in every honourable pursuit, and gradually opening with every occasion to display them, carried off the palm of military renown from the most illustrious captains of the age. Cimon alone surpassed him in the object of his victories gained over Barbarians ; but Pericles equalled Cimon in valour and conduct. A rivalry in warlike fame was followed by a competition for civil honours. Cimon, who had been introduced on the theatre of public life by the virtuous Aristides, re-

* Suidas.

† Plut. in. Pericl.

garded, like that great man, a moderate aristocracy, as the government most conducive to public happiness. The contrary opinion was warmly maintained by Pericles, who found an ostentatious admiration of democracy the best expedient for removing the prejudice excited against him, by his resemblance to Pisistratus, of aspiring, or at least of being worthy to aspire, at royal power. On every occasion, he defended the privileges of the people against the pretensions of the rich and noble: he embraced not only the interests, but adopted the capricious passions, of the multitude; cherishing their presumption, flattering their vanity, indulging their rapacity, gratifying their taste for pleasure without expense, and fomenting their natural antipathy to the Spartans, who, as the patrons of rigid aristocracy, were peculiarly obnoxious to their resentment.

The condition of the times powerfully conspired with the views and measures of Pericles, since the glory and wealth acquired in the Persian war, procured not only allies and power to the state, but industry and independence to the populace. The son of Xanthippus impelled this natural current, which ran so strongly in his favour when he maintained, that the citizens of Athens were entitled to enjoy equal advantages at home, to challenge a just pre-eminence in Greece, and to assume a legal dominion over their distant colonies and confederates.

encourages
their ambi-
tious pre-
tensions.

These unfortunate communities had unwarily forged their own chains, when they consented to raise an annual subsidy to maintain the guardian navy of Athens. They perceived not, that this temporary benevolence would be soon converted into a perpetual tribute, since in proportion as they became unaccustomed to war, they laid themselves at the mercy of that republic, to which they had tamely intrusted the care of their defence. When the rigorous exactions of Athens speedily warned them of their error, the wide intervals at which they were separated from each other, rendered it impossible for them to afford mutual assistance, and

Means by
which he
subdued
the Athe-
nian colo-
nies and
allies.
A. C. 470
—440.

to act with united vigour. Naxos, Thasos, Ægina, Eubœa, Samos, and other islands or cities of less importance, boldly struggled to repel usurpation; but fighting singly, were successively subdued; while new, and more grievous, burdens were cruelly imposed on them. The least patient again murmured, petitioned, rebelled, and taking arms to resist oppression, were treated with the severity due to unprovoked sedition. The punishment inflicted on them was uniformly rigorous. They were compelled to deliver up the authors of the revolt, to surrender their shipping, to demolish their walls, or receive an Athenian garrison, to pay the expenses of the war, and give hostages for their future obedience.* It is not the business of general history to describe more minutely the events of this social war, which was carried on chiefly by Pericles, and finished in the course of thirty years, with every success that the most presumptuous ambition of Athens could either expect or desire. Samos, the capital of the island of that name, made the most vigorous resistance; but at length surrendered to Pericles, after a siege of nine months, in the ninth year before the war of Peloponnesus.†

Spirit of the
Athenian
govern-
ment.

Historians, partial or credulous, have handed down some atrocious cruelties committed after the taking of Samos, which may be confidently rejected as fictions, injurious to the fame of Pericles, who, though he approved and animated the aspiring genius of his country, and vainly flattered himself that he could justify, by reasons of state, its most ambitious usurpations, uniformly showed himself incapable of any deliberate wickedness. It may be observed, however, that, as the moderate peace with Sparta had been concluded chiefly with a view to allow the Athenians to apply their undivided attention to the affairs of their tributaries, the severities exercised over these unfortunate states were in consequence of that treaty rather increased than mitigated. Athenian magistrates and garri-

Its exces-
sive severi-
ty towards
its depen-
dencies.

* Thucyd. & Diodor. loc. citat.

† Thucyd. l. i. p. 75.

sons were sent to govern and command them. They were burdened with new impositions, and dishonoured by new badges of servitude. The lands, which the labour of their ancestors had cultivated, were seized and appropriated by strangers, who enjoyed the distinction of Athenian colonies; and all these once independent and flourishing republics were thenceforth compelled to submit their mutual contests, their domestic differences, and even their private litigations, to the cognizance and decision of Athenian assemblies and tribunals.* By drawing thus closely the reins of government, Pericles, in the course of ten years, brought into the treasury of Athens the sum of near two millions sterling.† His vigilance seasonably displayed the terrors of the Athenian navy before the most distant enemies or allies of the republic; by alternate pliancy and firmness, by successive promises, bribes, and threats, he repressed the jealous hostility of neighbouring powers; and while his ambition and magnificence fortified and adorned the capital with external strength and splendour, they also laid the foundations of those internal disorders which rendered his long administration glorious for his contemporaries, fatal to the succeeding generation, and ever memorable with posterity.

* Isocrates de Pace: & Xenoph. de Repub. Athen.

† Thucyd. Diodor. Isocrat. Plut. &c.

CHAP. XIII.

Transition to the internal State of Athens.—Laws of Draco—Solon—Pisistratus—Clisthenes—Aristides—Pericles.—Final Settlement of the Athenian Government.—View of the Athenian Empire.—The combined Effect of external Prosperity and Democratic Government on Manners—Arts—Luxury.—History of Grecian Literature and Philosophy.—Singular Contrast and Balance of Virtues and Vices.—The sublime Philosophy of Anaxagoras and Socrates.—The unprincipled Captiousness of the Sophists.—The moral Tragedies of Sophocles and Euripides.—The licentious Buffoonery of Aristophanes.—The imitative Arts employed to the noblest Purposes—and abused to the most infamous.—Magnificence of public Festivals.—Simplicity in private Life.—Modest Reserve of Athenian Women.—Voluptuousness, Impudence, and Artifices of the School of Aspasia.

Transition
to the inter-
nal state of
Athens.

THE taking of Samos closed the long series of Athenian conquests. During the nine subsequent years, that once fortunate people enjoyed and abused the blessings of peace and prosperity. Their ostentatious display of power increased the envy and terror of Greeks and Barbarians, and excited the obstinate and bloody war of twenty-seven years, during which the force of the whole Grecian nation was exerted to demolish or uphold the stately edifice of empire that had been reared by the ambitious patriotism of Pericles. Assisted by feeble or reluctant allies, Athens long struggled against the combined strength of Peloponnesus, Bœotia, Macedon, Sicily, and Persia; and our curiosity must deservedly be attracted towards

the internal resources and moral condition of a people, who, with few natural advantages, could make such memorable and pertinacious efforts, and who, amidst the din of arms, still cultivating and improving their favourite arts, produced those immortal monuments of taste and genius, which, surviving the destruction of their walls, navy, and harbours, have ever attested the glory of Athens, and the impotent vengeance of her enemies. In an inquiry of this kind, the science of government and laws, which gives security to all other sciences, merits the first place in our attention: nor, at this distance of time, will the enlightened reader contemplate with indifference the laws of Athens, which having been incorporated* into the Roman jurisprudence about the middle of the fifth century before Christ, served, after an interval of above sixteen hundred years, to abolish the barbarous practices of the Gothic nations, and to introduce justice, security, and refinement, among the modern inhabitants of Europe.†

* The Romans sent deputies to Athens, to obtain a copy of Solon's laws, four hundred and fifty-four years before Christ. The benefits derived from these salutary institutions were gratefully acknowledged by the liberal candour of a people, who knew how to appreciate the merit of enemies and subjects. Hear the language of Pliny, (l. viii. ep. 24.) to Maximus, who in the reign of Trajan was appointed governor of the province of Achæia or Greece: "Remember that you go to a country, where letters, politeness, and agriculture itself (if we believe common report,) were invented.....Revere the gods and heroes, the ancient virtue and glory of the nation. Respect even its fables and its vanity; remembering that from Greece we derived our laws. The right of conquest, indeed, hath enabled us to impose our laws on the Greeks; but that people had first given to us their laws, at our solicitation, and when they had nothing to fear from our arms. It would be inhuman and barbarous to deprive them of the small remnant of liberty which they still possess."

† Justinian's Pandects, it is well known were discovered at Amalfi, in Italy, A. D. 1130. In less than half a century afterwards, the civil law was studied and understood in all the great provinces of Europe; and this study (as Mr. Hume observes, Reign of Richard the Third) tended to sharpen the wits of men, to give solidity to their judgment, to improve their taste, and to abolish the barbarous jurisprudence which universally prevailed among the Gothic nations. To this law we owe the abolition of the mode of proof by the or-

Laws and
govern-
ment.

The admirable institutions of the heroic ages were built on religion; which, as we have fully explained above, ascertained and enforced the rights and obligations of public and private life. But the abused authority of priests and oracles, and the natural depravity of man, ever solicitous to obtain the partial favour of his heavenly protectors on easier terms than the faithful discharge of his duty, gradually severed, by fraud or violence, the natural and most salutary union between religion and morality; in consequence of which separation, the former degenerated into an illiberal superstition, and the latter relaxed into licentiousness, or stiffened into pedantry. The striking comparison, or rather contrast, between the genius and character, the virtues and vices, of the Greeks, as variously described by Homer and by Solon, and which is so much to the advantage of the earlier period, must, in the progress of this discourse, naturally present itself to the reflection of the attentive reader, and will set in the clearest point of view the unhappy revolution of manners, which time and accident had produced in the wide interval between the poet and the legislator.

deal, the corsnet, the duel, and other methods equally ridiculous and absurd. Pecuniary commutations ceased to be admitted for crimes; private revenge was no longer authorised by the magistrate; and the community was made to feel its interest in maintaining the rights, and avenging the wrongs, of all its members. See more in the admirable discourse annexed to the Reign of Richard the Third. I shall add but one observation in Mr. Hume's own words: "The sensible utility of the Roman law, both to public and private interest, recommended the study of it, at a time when the more exalted and speculative sciences carried no charms with them; and thus the last branch of ancient literature which remained uncorrupted, was happily the first transmitted to the modern world; for it is remarkable, that in the decline of Roman learning, when the philosophers were universally infected with superstition and sophistry, and the poets and historians with barbarism, the lawyers, who, in other countries, are seldom models of science or politeness, were yet able, by the constant study and close imitation of their predecessors, to maintain the same good sense in their decisions and reasonings, and the same purity in their language and expression." Hume's Hist. 3d vol. 8vo. p. 300.

The very imperfect legislation of Draco,* who flourished thirty years before Solon,† proved that the Athenians felt the want of a science, which they knew not how to acquire or cultivate. The austere gravity of that magistrate seems to have imposed on the easy credulity of the multitude; for his ignorance or severity were alike unworthy of the important office with which he was intrusted. He gave laws, which, according to the lively expression of an orator, seemed to be written,‡ not with ink, but with blood; since death or banishment were his ordinary penalties for the most trivial offences, as well as for the most dangerous crimes: and he justified this rigour, by absurdly observing, that the smallest disorders deserved death, and no severer punishment could be inflicted on the greatest. The laws of Draco, therefore, tended only to increase the evils which they were designed to remedy;§ and no people ever presented a scene of greater confusion and misery, than did the unhappy Athenians, when the abilities and virtues of Solon were seasonably called to their relief.

Legislation
of Draco;
Olymp.
xxxix. 1.
A. C. 624.

In relating the general revolutions of Greece, we had occasion to describe the important services, and illustrious merit of this extraordinary man, whose disinterestedness, patriotism, and humanity equalled his military conduct and success. His royal extraction (for he sprang from the race of the Codridæ,) his experienced abilities, above all, his approved wisdom and equity, pointed him out for the noblest and most sublime employment of humanity, that of regulating the laws and government of a

of Solon.
Olymp.
xli. 3.
A. C. 594.

* Suidas in voce Draco. Pollux, l. viii. c. vi.

† Meursius, Solon.

‡ The orator Demades, of whom more hereafter. The observation has been always repeated in speaking of Draco, though his laws were certainly *written* neither with blood nor ink. Even those of Solon were only *engraved* on tables kept in the citadel.

§ Aristot. Politic. l. ii. & Plut. in Solon.

State of
Athens in
the time of
Solon.

free people. Such, at least, the Athenians may be considered, when their unanimous suffrage rendered Solon the absolute umpire of their whole constitution and policy; although, prior to this period, they suffered the combined evils of anarchy and oppression.* The magistrates plundered the treasury and the temples; and often betrayed, for bribes, the interests of their country. The rich tyrannised over the poor, the poor continually alarmed the safety of the rich. The rapacity of creditors knew no bounds. They compelled the insolvent debtors to cultivate their lands like cattle; to perform the service of beasts of burden; and to transfer to them their sons and daughters, whom they exported as slaves to foreign countries. Solon, with a laudable vanity, boasts of having recovered and restored to their native rights many of those unhappy men, whose sentiments had been debased, and language corrupted, by the infamy of Barbarian servitude.† The wretched populace deriving courage from despair, had determined no longer to submit to such multiplied rigours; and before the wisdom of the lawgiver interposed, they had taken the resolution to elect and follow some warlike leader, to attack and butcher their oppressors, to establish an equal partition of lands, and to institute a new form of government.‡ But the numerous clients and retainers, who, in a country little acquainted with arts and manufactures, depended on the wealthy proprietors of the lands and mines of Attica, must have rendered this undertaking alike dangerous to both parties; so that both became willing rather to submit their differences to law, than to decide them by the sword.

His regula-
tions con-
cerning
property.

The impartiality of Solon merited the unlimited confidence of his country. He maintained the ancient division of property, but abolished debts. He established the rate of interest at 12 per cent. at which it

* Fragm. Solonis apud Demosth. p. 234, edit. Wol.

† Idem, ibid.

‡ Plut. in Solon.

afterwards remained ; but forbade, that the insolvent debtor should become the slave of his creditor, or be compelled to sell his children into servitude. After these preliminary regulations, which seemed immediately necessary to the public peace, Solon proceeded, with an impartial and steady hand, to new-model the government,* on this generous, but equitable principle, that the few ought not, as hitherto, to command, and the many to obey ; but that the collective body of the people, legally convened in a national assembly, were entitled to decide, by a plurality of voices, the alternatives of peace and war ; to contract or dissolve alliances with foreign states ; to enjoy all the branches of legislative or *sovereign* power ;† and to elect, approve, and judge the magistrates or ministers intrusted, for a limited time, with the *executive* authority.

New-models the government.

* The most correct information concerning the ancient republic of Athens, and the laws of Solon, is contained in Aristot. *Fragm. de Civit. Athen.* and in various parts of his second, fourth, and sixth books of *Politics*. 2. In *Isocrat. Areopagit. Panathen. & Panegyri.* And 3. In *Plut. in Vit. Solon.* Xenophon's *Treatise* concerning the Athenian republic, relates to later times, when many corruptions had crept in, as will be afterwards explained. It is remarkable, that Polybius, l. vi. has confounded the moderate institutions of Solon with the democratical licentiousness and tyranny introduced by Pericles and his successors in the administration. The palpable errors of so judicious an author prove how little accurate knowledge the Greeks possessed on the subject of their own history ; and how impossible it is for a modern writer, who blindly follows such guides, not to fall into innumerable errors and contradictions. The *treatise* of Aristotle (*de Civitate*) above mentioned, deserves particular attention from those who write or study the history of republics. In it we see the germ, and often more than the germ, of the political works of Machiavel, which Montesquieu has so often copied, without once acknowledging his obligation.

† The election contained a mixture of chance, since those who were named by the people cast lots to decide on whom the office should be conferred. The same practice prevails in choosing the senators of the republic of Berne. But Solon enacted, that the fortunate candidate should undergo what is called a probation ; his character and merits were thus exposed to a second scrutiny, in consequence of which, it seemed scarcely possible that any man should attain power, who was altogether unworthy of public confidence.

His institutions suited the condition of the times.

In the actual state of most countries of Europe, such a form of government, as only takes place in some small cantons of Switzerland, would be attended with the inconvenience of withdrawing the citizens too much from their private affairs. But in ancient Greece, and particularly in Attica, the slaves were four times more numerous than the freemen;* and of the latter we may compute that little more than one half were entitled to any share in the sovereignty. Strangers, and all those who could not ascertain their Athenian descent, both in the male and female line, were totally excluded from the assembly and courts of justice. The regulations of Solon marked the utmost attention to preserve the pure blood of Athens unmixed and uncorrupted; nor could any foreigner, whatever merit he might claim with the public, be admitted to the rank of citizen, unless he abandoned for ever his native country, professed the knowledge of some highly useful or ingenious art, and, in both cases had been chosen by ballot, in a full assembly of six thousand Athenians. These circumstances (especially as the Athenian people were usually convened only four times in thirty-five days) prevented their assemblies from being either so inconvenient and burthensome, or so numerous and tumultuary, as might at first sight be supposed. Yet their numbers, and still more their impetuosity and ignorance, must have proved inconsistent with good government, if Solon had not secured the vessel of the republic from the waves of popular frenzy, by the two firm anchors of the Senate and the Areopagus; tribunals originally of great dignity and of very extensive power, into which men of a certain description only could be received as members.

His division of the citizens.

Solon divided the Athenians into four classes, according to the produce of their estates. The first class consisted of those whose lands annually yielded five hundred measures of liquid, as well as dry commodities, and the minimum of whose yearly income may be cal-

* See my Introductory Discourse to the Orations of Lysias and Isocrates, p. 5, & seq.

culated at sixty pounds sterling ; which is equivalent, if we estimate the relative value of money by the price of labour, and of the things most necessary to life, to about six hundred pounds sterling in the present age.* The second class consisted of those whose estates produce three hundred measures ; the third, of those whose estates produced two hundred ; the fourth, and by far the most numerous class of Athenians, either possessed no landed property, or at least enjoyed not a revenue in land equal to twenty-four pounds sterling, or, agreeably to the above proportion, two hundred and forty pounds of our present currency.

All ranks of citizens were alike admitted to vote in the public assembly, and to judge in the courts of justice, whether civil or criminal, which were properly so many committees of the assembly.† But the three first classes were exclusively entitled to sit in the senate, to decide in the Areopagus, or to hold any other office of magistracy. To these dignities they were elected by the free suffrages of the people, to whom they were accountable for their administration, and by whom they might be punished for malversation or negligence, although they derived no emolument from the diligent discharge of their duty.

Prerogatives of the first classes.

The senate of four hundred, which, eighty-six years after its institution, was augmented to five hundred by Clisthenes, enjoyed the important prerogatives of convoking the popular assembly ; of previously examining all matters before they came to be decided by the people, which

Of the senate of 500.

* See Introduction to Lysias, &c. p. 14.

† In my introductory discourses to the Oration of Lysias, &c. I had occasion to explain the nature of the Athenian tribunals. Since the publication of that work, the same subject, and particularly the form of civil process, has been accurately explained by Sir William Jones, in the Dissertations annexed to his translation of Isæus. Mr. Pettingal's learned work upon the use and practice of *juries* among the ancients, lately fell into my hands. Wherein my ideas and his differ, will easily appear from the text, and needs not to be pointed out.

gave to it a negative before debate in all public resolutions; and of making laws by its sole authority, which had force during a year. Besides this general superintendence, the senate was exclusively invested with many particular branches of the executive power. The president of this board or council had the custody of the public archives and treasury. The senate alone built ships; equipped fleets and armies; seized and confined state criminals; examined and punished several offences, which were not expressly forbidden by any positive law. The weight of such a council, which assembled every day, except festivals, infused a large mixture of aristocracy into the Athenian constitution. This, as we shall immediately explain, was still farther increased by the authority of the Areopagus, a court so named from the place where it was held; a hill sacred to Mars, adjoining to the citadel.

The nine archons. The principal magistrates in Athens were the nine archons, the first of whom gave his name to the year, and presided in the civil courts of justice, where a committee of the people, chosen promiscuously from all classes by lot,* sat as judges and jury; but where it belonged to the archon and his assessors, men appointed by suffrage, and acquainted with forms, to take what in Scotland is called a pre-cognition, to prescribe the form of action, to give the ballot,† and to receive and declare the verdict and sentence of the court. The archon next in dignity, who had the appellation of king, presided in causes respecting religion and things sacred, which formed the object of an important and dangerous branch of Athenian jurisprudence. The archon, third in dignity, with

* The essential difference between the Roman and Athenian governments consisted in the different constitution of the judicial power: which at Rome remained 300 years in the hands of the senate. The seditions of the Gracchi, and most of the civil dissensions which happened before the time of Augustus, had for their object or pretence, the altering of this order of things, and bringing the Roman constitution nearer the Athenian.

† *Οἱ τιθέντες τον αἰωνα και την ἄρπον δίδοντες*, are the words of Lysias. The same writer mentions the *παρεδροι, συνδικοι*, assessors, syndics.

his assessors the generals,* presided in military matters; and the six remaining, who were known by the general appellation of thesmothetæ, heard criminal pleas of various kinds, or rather directed the proceedings of the six courts where criminal causes were examined and determined. These The Areopagus. nine archons, or presidents of the several courts of

justice, like all other Athenian magistrates, were, at the expiration of their annual office, accountable to the people; and when their conduct, after a severe scrutiny, appeared to merit public approbation and gratitude, they were received, and remained for life, members of the Areopagus, a senate invested with a general inspection over the laws and religion, as well as over the lives and manners of the citizens: and which, in dangerous emergencies, was even entitled to assume a sort of dictatorial power.†

Such is the great outline of the constitution established by Solon, according to which every Athenian citizen enjoyed the inestimable privilege of being judged by his peers, and tried by laws to which he himself had consented. Although the legislative and judicial powers were thus lodged with the people, men of property and ability were alone intrusted with the administration of government; and as power in some measure followed property, the same expedient which served to maintain a due distinction of ranks in society, tended also to promote the industry and frugality of the multitude, that they might thereby become entitled to share those honours and offices, to which persons of a certain estate only could aspire.

Happy tendency of Solon's plan of government.

The laws of Solon were of the most extensive nature, comprehending not only rules of right, but maxims of morality, regulations of commerce,

Extensive nature of his laws.

* Lysias, in the second oration against Alcibiades (a military cause,) not only mentions the στρατηγοί, or generals, but addresses them separately from the ἄνδρες δικάσται, or judges.

† Isocrat. Oratio Areopagit.

and precepts of agriculture. To describe his institutions respecting such matters as are properly the objects of legislation, would be explaining those great, but familiar principles, concerning marriage, succession, testaments, the rights of *persons* and of *things*, which through the medium of the Roman law, have been conveyed into the jurisprudence of all the civilized nations of Europe. His laws concerning education and manners prove that drunkenness and unnatural love were the predominant vices of that early age. It was a particular duty of the archons to prevent or punish offences, committed in consequence of intoxication; and the regulations concerning schools,* which were not to be opened till sunrise, which were ordered to be shut before night, and into which none but such relations of the master, as were particularly specified by law could on any pretence be admitted, marked the utmost solicitude to root out an evil which already infected and disgraced the manners of Greece.

His system
of educa-
tion.

The education recommended by Solon nearly resembled that above described, which prevailed generally through Greece.† The children of Athenian citizens, when taken from the hands of the women, were delivered to two masters, of whom the one formed the body and the other the mind. Swimming, and the easier exercises, prepared them for the harder toils of the gymnastic. Reading and learning by heart the precepts and examples of the poets, made way for the severer studies of eloquence and philosophy. In process of time, music, geometry, and drawing, seem to have entered into the plan of a liberal education.‡ At

Duties and
employ-
ments of the
youth.

the age of twenty, the youth of all ranks took an oath in the temple of Agraulos (an appellation of Minerva,) to obey and to maintain the laws of their country; to use their best endeavours to promote its prosperity; to follow the standard of whatever commanders might be appointed to conduct them; to sail to

* Æschin. in Timarchum.

‡ Arist. Polit. l. vii. c. iii.

† See chapters V. and VI.

every part of the world, when summoned by the public service, to fight to death for their native land; and to regard wheat, barley, vines, and olives, as the only boundaries of Attica;* a preposterous arrogance in that little republic, which already betrayed an ambition to conquer and appropriate all the cultivated part of the world. When the Athenian youth were not, in consequence of this oath, engaged in military service, they were obliged by law to follow such employments as suited their respective fortunes. Agriculture, commerce, and mechanic arts, fell to the share of the poor; the rich still continued their application to gymnastic and philosophy, carefully studied the laws of the republic, examined the ancient and actual condition of their own and neighbouring states; and, at the age of thirty, appeared as candidates in the assembly for such offices of trust and honour as their regular manners, inoffensive and dutiful behaviour in all the relations of private life, temperance, economy, public spirit, and abilities,† might obtain from the voluntary suffrage of the people.

The usurpation of Pisistratus, though it destroyed for a time the political liberty of Athens, gave stability to most of the laws and forms introduced by Solon. That extraordinary *tyrant*, for so the Greeks styled him, was not more distinguished by the loftiness of his genius than the humanity of his disposition; and had not the violence of contending factions, and the fury of his enemies, inflamed his natural love of power, the name of Pisistratus would stand the foremost in the list of Grecian patriots and heroes. His valour and conduct were signalised in the conquest of Nisæa, Salamis, Naxos, Delos, and Sigæum; and if he displayed boldness and address in acquiring sovereignty he displayed still more moderation and virtue in administering it. He assumed, indeed, the royal dignities of priest and general, and took care that the chief offices of magistracy should be filled by

Usurpation
of Pisistratus,
A. C. 578.

His moderate and wise administration,

* See Introduction to Lysias, &c. p. 16.

† Lysias, *passim*.

his partisans. But he maintained the regular course of law and justice, not only by his authority, but by his example; having appeared in person to answer an accusation in the Areopagus. He not only enforced the laws of Solon against idleness, but endeavoured to give them more efficacy by introducing new arts and manufactures into Attica. He was the first who brought into that country the complete collection of Homer's poems, which he commanded to be sung at the Panathenæan festival; nor can we suppose that he should have been zealous to diffuse the liberal and manly sentiments of that divine poet, if his government had not resembled the moderation and equity of the heroic ages, rather than the despotism of tyrants.

His son Hipparchus imitated and surpassed the mild virtues of his father; and, amidst the turbulence of the latter democracy, it was acknowledged with a sigh by the Athenians, that their ancestors were indeed happy under Solon and Pisistratus, but that the reign of the tyrant Hipparchus brought back on earth the golden days of Saturn. The father had required a tenth part of the produce of Attica, to support his guards and the other appendages of royalty; his more generous son remitted one half of this imposition. While he alleviated the burdens, yet encouraged the industry of his subjects, by building the temple of Olympian Jupiter, he was solicitous to dispel their ignorance and barbarity by erecting pillars in every part of the city, engraved with eligiac verses, containing lessons of wisdom and precepts of morality. He collected the first library in Athens; and his liberal rewards, and still more his agreeable manners and winning affability, attracted to that city the most distinguished poets of the age.

His murder
exasperates
Hippias.

The murder of Hipparchus exasperated the temper of his brother and successor Hippias; but notwithstanding the calamities which the latter inflicted and suffered, it must be allowed that the government of Pisistratus and his family, which, with various interrup-

tions, lasted sixty-eight years,* increased the strength, and promoted the refinement of Athens.†

Yet in nothing was that usurpation more advantageous than in the animating sense of liberty which the memory of past servitude, under Hippias, excited and kept alive in Athens, after the popular government had been restored by Clisthenes. We have already had occasion to relate the foreign victories of the republic which immediately followed that event; but at the same time the constitution of government underwent a considerable change: by admitting to the rank of citizens a promiscuous crowd of strangers, fugitives, Athenians of half blood, and perhaps slaves, the tribes were augmented from four to ten; and the senators from four to five hundred. The ostracism was likewise established; a law by which any citizen whose influence or abilities seemed dangerous to liberty, might be banished ten years, without the proof or allegation of any positive crime.

In this condition the republic continued thirty years, until the glorious victories of Salamis, Plataea, and Mycalé, encouraged the lowest but most numerous class of citizens, by whose valour those memorable exploits had been achieved, to make further invasions on the prerogatives of their superiors. The sudden wealth, which the rich spoils of the barbarians had diffused among all ranks of men, increased the *census* of individuals, and destroyed the balance of the constitution. Aristides, who perceived it to be impossible to resist the natural progress of democracy, seasonably yielded to men who had arms in their hands, and firmness in their hearts; and proposed, with apparent satisfaction, but much secret reluctance,‡ a law by which the Athenian magistrates should

The government changed by Clisthenes. Olymp. lxvii. 3. A. C. 510.

Important alteration made by Aristides. Olymp. lxxv. 2. A. C. 479.

* Between 578 and 510, B. C.

† See the treatise of Meurnius, entitled *Pisistratus*, one of the few satisfactory performances in the immense collection of Gronovius.

‡ *Ἐκον αὐτοῖς δε θυμῷ* is cited on this occasion by Plutarch, to express the forced generosity of Aristides to the populace.

be thenceforth promiscuously elected from the four classes of citizens. This innovation paved the way for the still greater changes begun twenty years afterwards, and gradually completed by Pericles; a revolution of which the consequences were not immediately felt, but which continually became more sensible, and finally terminated in the ruin of Athens and of Greece.

The democracy completed by Pericles. Olymp. lxxxii. 4. A. C. 449.

The general reasons which prevailed on the equity and discernment of Pericles to espouse, with undue warmth, the cause of the populace, have in the preceding chapter been sufficiently explained. Yet whatever partial motives of interest and ambition* might warp the views of this illustrious statesman, it must be acknowledged that the foreign transactions and success of the republic, and particularly the new situation in which the Athenians found themselves placed with regard to their distant allies and colonies, might naturally suggest and occasion very important alterations in the Athenian constitution. The ancient and sacred law which obliged every citizen, without fee, or reward, to take arms in defence of his country, could not easily be extended to the obligation of protecting, without a proper recompense, the interest of foreign communities. The scanty population of Attica sufficed not to answer the demands of so many distant expeditions. It became necessary to hire troops wherever they might be found, and as this necessity introduced pay into the Athenian armies, a similar, though not equally cogent, reason established fees

* Plutarch (in Pericle) mentions a particular reason which engaged Pericles to counteract the aristocracy, and to abridge the power of the Areopagus. Although he had been often *named* for the office of archon, the *lot* had never fallen on him; so that he could not be received as a member of that respected court. If this observation be well founded, it shows how little real weight the annual magistracies had at Athens; since Pericles, though he never attained the dignity of archon, governed the republic many years with unrivalled authority.

and salaries for all the different orders of judges and magistrates. The same principle of duty and public spirit, which obliged every freeman to fight without pay, likewise obliged him gratuitously to judge, consult, and deliberate, for the benefit of his country. But when the contested interests of foreign, though dependent communities, were agitated and adjusted in the tribunals of Athens, it was natural for those who spent their time in an employment to which no social obligation called them, to demand a proper reward for their useful services. At first, therefore, a *small* sum, but which gradually increased with the power of the people, was regularly distributed among the citizens, for every deliberation which they held, and for every cause which they determined.

of fees and salaries to the magistrates.

The desire of reaping this profit made the populace anxious to draw all causes and deliberations before their own tribunals and assemblies. This design was successfully accomplished by Ephialtes,* an artful and daring demagogue, whom Pericles employed as a proper instrument to effect such invidious measures as were most obnoxious to the rich and noble. While his patron extended the renown of Athens by his foreign victories, and gradually reduced into subjection the colonies and allies of the republic, the obsequious Ephialtes zealously promoted his domestic measures; and by undermining the authority of the senate and of the Areopagus,† the

These circumstances totally un-
hinge the government established by Solon.

* Plut. in Pericle.

† Authors have not described in what particular respects, or by what particular means, Ephialtes effected his purpose: yet we may collect, from obscure hints on this subject, that he not only brought before the inferior tribunals causes hitherto confined to the Areopagus, but took from that court its general inspection and superintendence over the religion and laws; which offices he bestowed on the popular court of the *ἡλιαία* and the *νομοφύλακες*, who were appointed, and dismissed, at the will of the people. He likewise rendered the *probation* for becoming an *Areopagite* less severe than formerly. Persons crept into this order, whose character disgraced it. The *Areopagites* became equally accessible to presents and to beauty; and their decisions fell into contempt. See the Discourse of Isocrates upon reforming the

firmest bulwarks to the aristocracy, obtained a signal victory over the laws of Solon. The assassination of Ephialtes proved only the weakness of his enemies; and we shall find, in the subsequent history of Athens, that most matters of deliberation came, thenceforth, in the first instance, before the popular assembly; that the wise institutions of Solon were reduced to an empty form; and that the magnanimity of Pericles, the extravagance of his immediate successors, the patriotism of Thrasybulus and Conon, the integrity of Phocion, the artifices of Æschines, and the eloquence of Demosthenes, successively swayed, at will, a wild and capricious democracy.

External
and domestic
prosperity of the
republic.
Olymp.
lxxxv. 1.
A. C. 440.

The revolution which immediately followed, in the manners, character, and conduct of the Athenians, was the natural consequence of the change of government, combined with other circumstances naturally resulting from their domestic and external prosperity. In the course of a few years, the success of Aristides, Cimon, and Pericles, had tripled the revenues, and increased, in a far greater proportion, the dominions of the republic. The Athenian galleys commanded the eastern coasts of the Mediterranean; their merchantmen had engrossed the traffic of the adjacent countries; the magazines of Athens abounded with wood, metal, ebony, ivory, and all the materials of the useful as well as of the agreeable arts; they imported the luxuries of Italy, Sicily, Cyprus, Lydia, Pontus, and Peloponnesus; experience had improved their skill of working the silver mines of mount Laurium; they had lately opened the valuable marble veins in mount Pentelicus; the honey of Hymettus became important in domestic use and foreign traffic; the culture of their olives (oil being long their staple commodity, and the only production of Attica which Solon allowed them to export) must have improved with the general improvement of the country in arts and agricul-

government of Athens, and Athenæus, l. ix. That Ephialtes, or Pericles himself, likewise weakened the authority of the senate (although it is not remarked by any ancient author,) appears from all the subsequent history of Athens.

ture, especially under the active administration of Pericles, who liberally let loose the public treasure to encourage every species of industry.*

But if that minister promoted the love of action, he found it necessary at least to comply with, if not to excite, the extreme passion for pleasure, which then began to distinguish his countrymen. The people of Athens, successful in every enterprise against their foreign as well as domestic

Effect of this combined with the change of government, on manners and arts.

enemies, seemed entitled to reap the fruits of their dangers and victories. For the space of at least twelve years preceding the war of Peloponnesus, their city afforded a perpetual scene of triumph and festivity. Dramatic entertainments, to which they were passionately addicted, were no longer performed in slight unadorned edifices, but in stone or marble theatres erected at great expense, and embellished with the most precious productions of nature and of art. The treasury was opened, not only to supply the decorations of this favourite amusement, but to enable the poorer citizens to enjoy it, without incurring any private expense; and thus, at the cost of the state, or rather of its tributary allies and colonies, to feast and delight their ears and fancy with the combined charms of music and poetry. The pleasure of the eye was peculiarly consulted and gratified in the architecture of theatres and other ornamental buildings; for as Themistocles had strengthened, Pericles adorned his native city; and unless the concurring testimony of antiquity was illustrated in the Parthenon, or temple of Minerva, and other existing remains worthy to be immortal, it would be difficult to believe that in the space of a few years, there could have been created those numerous, yet inestimable wonders of art, those temples, theatres, statues, altars, baths, gymnasia, and porticos, which, in the language of ancient panegyric, rendered Athens the eye and light of Greece.†

* Isocrat. Areop. de Pace, & Panegyric. Xenoph. & Aristot. de Repub. Athen.

† Isocrat. & Aristid. in Panegyric.

Luxury and
vices of
Athens.

Pericles was blamed for thus decking one favourite city, like a vain voluptuous harlot, at the expense of plundered provinces;* but it would have been fortunate for the Athenians if their extorted wealth had not been employed in more perishing, as well as more criminal, luxury. The pomp of religious solemnities, which were twice as numerous and costly in Athens as in any other city of Greece; the extravagance of entertainments and banquets, which on such occasions always followed the sacrifices; the increase of private luxury, which naturally accompanied this public profusion, exhausted the resources, without augmenting the glory, of the republic. Instead of the bread, herbs, and simple fare recommended by the laws of Solon, the Athenians, soon after the eightieth Olympiad, availed themselves of their extensive commerce to import the delicacies of distant countries, which were prepared with all the refinements of cookery.† The wines of Cyprus were cooled with snow in summer; in winter‡ the most delightful flowers adorned the tables and persons of the wealthy Athenians. Nor was it sufficient to be crowned with roses, unless they were likewise anointed with the most precious perfumes.¶ Parasites, dancers, and buffoons, were an usual appendage of every entertainment.§ Among the weaker sex, the passion for delicate birds, distinguished by their voice or plumage, was carried to such excess as merited the name of madness.¶ The bodies of such youths as were not peculiarly addicted to hunting and horses, which began to be a prevailing taste,** were corrupted by the commerce of harlots, who had reduced their profession into system;†† while their minds were still more polluted by the licentious philosophy of the sophists. It is unnecessary to crowd the picture, since it may be observed, in one word, that the vices and extravagances which are supposed to charac-

* Plutarch. in Pericle. † Aristoph. Nubes, ver. 50. & Lysistrat. passim.

‡ Athen. l. xi. 3. & Xenoph. Memorabilia, l. ii.

¶ Xenoph. ibid.

§ Athenæus, l. i. & Xenoph. Symp.

¶ *Οπισθομανία*, Athen. l. xi. 3.

** Aristoph. Nubes, passim.

†† Alexis apud Athenæum, l. xiii.

terize the declining ages of Greece and Rome, took root in Athens during the administration of Pericles, the most splendid and most prosperous in the Grecian annals.

This paradox, for such it must appear, may be explained by considering the singular combination of circumstances, which, in the time of that statesman, gave every poison its antidote, and rendered the partial evils already described, only the thorn that ever accompanies the rose. The Grecian his-

Contrast and balance of virtues and vices, advantages and disadvantages.

tory of those times affords a more striking contrast than ever appeared in any other age or country, of wisdom and folly, of magnanimity and meanness, of liberty and tyranny, of simplicity and refinement, of austerity and voluptuousness. The sublime philosophy of Anaxagoras and Socrates was accompanied as with a deadly shade, by the dark unprincipled captiousness of the sophists; the pathetic and moral strains of Sophocles and Euripides were parodied by the licentious buffoonery of Aristophanes; painting and sculpture, which, under geniuses of the first order, like Phidias, served as handmaids to religion and virtue, degenerated under inferior artists into mean hirelings of vice and disorder; the modesty of Athenian matrons was set off as by a foil, when compared with the dissoluteness of the school of Aspasia; and the simple frugality of manners, which commonly prevailed in private families, even of the first distinction, was contrasted with the extravagant dissipation of public entertainments and festivals. To examine the parallel links of this complicated chain will illustrate the character of a people whose subsequent transactions form one principal object of Grecian history.

Philosophy, which in Greece alone deserves the peculiar attention of the historian, arose about the beginning of the sixth century before Christ, and in an hundred and fifty years attained the highest degree of perfection, and sunk into the lowest degeneracy and corruption, to which the use or abuse of the human intellect could raise or plunge it. Lesser Asia, to which Europe and

Parallel links of this chain examined.

History of
Greek phi-
losophy.

The seven
Sages.

America owe the inestimable benefits of their religion and letters, produced and nourished the tender plant of philosophy; and the flourishing Greek colonies on that delightful coast, communicated to their mother country this precious offspring of their soil. Thales of Miletus, Pittacus of Mitylenè, Bias of Prienè, Cleobulus of Lyndus in the isle of Rhodes, and the other wise men, as they were emphatically styled, who lived in that age, not only gave advice and assistance to their countrymen on difficult emergencies, but restrained their vices by wholesome laws, improved their manners by useful lessons of morality, and extended their knowledge by important researches and discoveries.* But the first attempt towards moral philosophy, as independent on, and unconnected with, religion, seems to have been the fables of Æsop, which, to men in an early period of society, must have appeared a very serious and useful species of composition. The sphere of history was narrow; the examples of the gods, amidst the continual corruptions of superstition, had become too flagitious for imitation; and men, whose rustic simplicity of life afforded them continual opportunities to observe the instinctive sagacity of certain animals, might derive many useful lessons from those humble instructors. In the early ages of Greece and Rome, and of all other nations whose history is recorded, fables were told, and in some degree believed, in the assembly and senate-house, on the most important occasions; for, in the infancy of society, men are children; and the delusion, which the belief of a fable supposes, is not more gross and improbable than many of those errors into which (as we have already proved†) their lively fancy had often plunged them. The same romantic cast of imagination which had animated woods and winds, mountains and rivers, which had changed heroes

* Plutarch. Sympos. & de Placit. Philosoph. Plato in Protagor. Diogen. Laert. passim.

† See above, Chap. II.

into gods, and gods into frail men, might endow animals with reason, and even speech.

The next step towards moral science was of a more refined and abstract kind, consisting of the sentences of the gnomologic poets,* and in those detached precepts or proverbs which, in all countries, have preceded any systematic account of morality. Each of the seven sages, as they were called, had his favourite maxim,† which he engraved in temples and other places of public resort; but at this distance of time it is impossible, amidst the differences of authors, to discover what belongs to each; nor is the search important, since all their maxims or proverbs, whatever efforts of generalization they might cost their inventors, now appear extremely simple and familiar.

The gnomonic poets.

These respectable fathers of Grecian philosophy, who silently diffused light through the gloom of a barbarous age, are said to have maintained a correspondence‡ with each other, as well as with Solon of Athens, Chilon of Sparta, and Perian-der of Corinth; men who, in imitation of their eastern brethren, chiefly cultivated such practical knowledge as qualified them to be the legislators, magistrates, and generals of their respective countries.

Thales the Milesian, alone, quitted the ordinary pursuits of civil and military renown; and although he composed verses, promulgated moral sentences, and, on some particular emergencies, gave seasonable advice to his countrymen, yet he established his fame on a basis more broad and permanent than the fluctuating interests of perishing communities. Many of the elementary propositions of geometry, afterwards collected by Euclid, were first discovered|| by Thales, who directed the acuteness of his mind with equal success to astronomy. He

The discoveries of Thales the Milesian.

* See the sentences of Theognis, which are evidently a collection, not the work of one man.

† Aristot. Rhet. ii. 21. Stobæus, Serm. p. 44, &c.

‡ Plut. Symp.

|| Proclus in Euclid.

divided the heavens into five zones; discovered the equinoxes and solstices; remarked the Ursa Minor; observed, and nearly predicted, eclipses.* The division of the year into three hundred and sixty-five days was already known to the Egyptians; but although Thales might borrow this, and perhaps other discoveries, from that ancient people, among whom he sometime resided, it appears, even from those authors who are ever prone to exaggerate the wisdom of Egypt, that he owed much less to that country, than to the native sagacity and penetration of his clear comprehensive mind.*

His school
and suc-
cessors,

Thales founded the Ionic school, in which he was succeeded by Anaximander and Anaximenes, who were followed by Anaxagoras, the instructor of Pericles, and Archelaus, who is called by ancient writers the master of Socrates. About fifty years after Thales, the same speculations which he had introduced were pursued by Xenophanes of Colophon, Leucippus and Parmenides of Elea, and Heraclitus of Ephesus. These ingenious men discovered many useful truths; yet all of them, not excepting Thales himself, likewise busied themselves with subjects that will for ever excite and elude human curiosity. Their doctrines were equally liable to objection, whichever of the elements they assumed as the first principle of nature; they universally agreed in asserting the fallacy of the senses, and the unworthiness of the vulgar superstition; but their various opinions concerning the origin and destruction of worlds, the magnitudes and distances of heavenly bodies, the essence of matter and spirit,† deserve only to be considered as the dreams of inquisitive men, whose ambition of knowledge carried them beyond the sphere of experience, and the clear deductions of reason. The system of Leucippus, the most famous of them all was improved by Democritus of Abdera,‡ and afterwards adopted by Epicurus,

degenerate
into athe-
ism.

* Hieronym. apud Laert. l. i. c. xxvii. Plin. l. xxxviii. c. xvii.

† See Diogen. Laert. l. i. Aristot. *Metaph.* passim, & Plut. *de Placit. Philosoph.*

‡ Laert. l. ix. Aristot. *Physic.* l. viii.

whose philosophy is sufficiently explained in the extraordinary work of Lucretius, the boldest monument which the world is ever like to behold, of learning, genius, and impiety.

But it is particularly worthy of observation, that while Democritus assailed the celestial man-
The sub-
lime philo-
sophy of
Anaxago-
ras.
 sions, and unveiled, with a daring hand, the feeble majesty of Grecian superstition, Anaxagoras of

Clazomené, at precisely the same period, revealed a new and infinitely more august spectacle, by first announcing to the heathen world, a self-existent, all-perfect mind, as the great cause and arranger of the material world. Thales and Pythagoras, with such of their disciples as faithfully adhered to their tenets, had indeed admitted spirit as a constituent principle of the universe; but they had so intimately blended mind and matter, that these dissimilar substances seemed to make an indissoluble compound, as the soul and body constitute but one man. According to Anaxagoras, on the other hand, the creating and sovereign intelligence was to be carefully distinguished from the soul of the world, which he seems to have regarded merely as a poetical expression for the laws which the Deity had impressed on his works. The great Ruler of the universe did not animate, but impel matter; he could not be included within its limited and perishing terms; his nature was pure and spiritual, and totally incapable of pollution by any corporeal admixture.*

The discovery and diffusion of this luminous and sublime principle which was naturally followed by an investigation of the moral attributes of the Deity, and the deducing from thence the great duties of morality, might have produced a general and happy revolution in Greece, under the zealous and persevering labours of Socrates and his followers, if the tendency of this divine philosophy had not been counteracted, not only by the gross prejudices of the vulgar, but by the more dangerous refinements of incredulous Sophists.

* Aristot. *Metaphys.* l. i. c. iii. Plato in *Cratylus*, & Plut. in *Pericle*.

Its tendency counter-acted by the Sophists.

The same spirit of inquiry, which leads to the discovery of truth, will often promote the propagation of error; and unfortunately for Greece, in the middle of the fifth century before Christ, errors were propagated, so congenial to the condition of the times, that they could not fail to take deep root, and flourish in a soil which was peculiarly well prepared to receive them. The glorious victories over the Cathaginians and Persians had increased the wealth and security, called forth the invention and industry, but at the same time, multiplied the wants, and inflamed the passions, of the Greeks. The more powerful cities, and particularly Athens and Syracuse, had attained a pitch of prosperity which exceeded their most sanguine hopes: elated by the bloom of health and the pride of riches, they continually sighed for new and unknown enjoyments, while both individuals and communities were ever ready to listen to such instructors as justified their vices, and taught them to abuse the gifts of fortune.

History of the Sophists. Olymp. lxxxv. 1. A. C. 440.

In this situation of affairs appeared the Sophists,* whose appellative, still familiar in the languages of Europe, pretty faithfully expresses their character. Hippias of Elis, Protagoras of Abdera, Prodicus of Ceos, Georgias of Leontium, with many inferior names, preserved in the writings of Xenophon, Plato, and Isocrates, started up about the same time, and exhibited a new phenomenon in Greece. The Olympic, and other public assemblies, furnished them with an opportunity to display their specious accomplishments to the admiring spectators. They frequented the great cities, particularly Athens, and acquired the friendship of the rich, and the applause of the multitude. They professed the knowledge of every science, and of every art, which they taught publicly, for a stipulated price; and, as they really possessed the art of persuasion, their disciples continually increased among the rich and the voluptuous, the idle and the vain.

* Vid. Philostrate. de Vit. Sophist.

Their language was glowing and harmonious, their manners elegant, their life splendid. When it served their interest, and pleased the taste of their hearers, they could paint virtue in the fairest and most engaging colours; but the capricious will of their scholars, whose passions they were ever careful to gratify, served as the only standard of their principles; and engaged them for the most part, to deck out the barren doctrines of Leucippus and Democritus with the meretricious arts of the rhetorician.

Their character and views.

Their morality supplied the springs from which Epicurus watered his gardens; and their captious logic furnished the arguments by which Pyrrho laboured, to justify his scepticism.* It would be easy to trace up to the Sophists that quibbling metaphysic, which being embodied in the Greek language, thenceforth adhered too closely to the philosophical writings of that people, and which totally disfigures many otherwise valuable compositions of antiquity. But our present business is only to remark the destructive effects immediately resulting from their tenets, which, while they undermined, without openly opposing, the ancient and popular superstition, boldly set at defiance all those useful maxims of conduct, and all those salutary discoveries of reason, which, amidst the insolence of the Greek democracies, fomented by prosperity, appeared essentially requisite to restrain the intemperance, injustice, and violence, of individuals and communities.

Their influence on philosophy and manners.

In several republics of Greece, the Sophists enjoyed a free career to exert their talents, practice their artifices, and to promote their fame and fortune. But in Athens their frauds were detected, and their characters unmasked by Socrates,† whose philosophy forms an important æra in the history of the human mind. The son of

Opposed by Socrates.

* See the note on the Sophists, in my Translation of Isocrates' Panegyric of Athens, p. 1, & seqq.

† To avoid prolixity in the account of Socrates and his philosophy, I cite not particular passages, but give the general result of my reading in Plato and Xenophon.

Sophroniscus was born at Athens, forty years before the commencement of the Peloponnesian war. The smallness of his patrimony, amounting only to three hundred pounds, and his original profession of a statuary,* have encouraged an opinion of the obscurity of his birth, among writers who did not reflect on the narrowness of Athenian fortunes, and who forgot to consider, that as hereditary distinctions were little known or regarded in the Grecian republics, a solid and permanent lustre was derived from the practice of ingenious arts, which could not be cultivated, as in ancient Rome, and sometimes in modern Europe, by servile or mercenary hands, but only by the first class of freemen and citizens. Whatever reputation or advantage Socrates might have acquired by the exercise of a profession, which was peculiarly encouraged by the taste of the times, and the magnificent spirit of Pericles, he readily sacrificed to the natural bent of his mind, which concealed, under an external form worthy to represent the voluptuous Silenus,† the fruitful seeds of every amiable and manly sentiment, and determined him, by an irresistible impulse, to the study of wisdom and virtue.

His education and character.

In his early youth he heard the physics of Archelaus, and learned the geometry of Theodorus;‡ and from these, and other teachers, acquired such an acquaintance with the fashionable theories concerning the formation of the universe, the original principles of things, the hidden powers of matter, as enabled him to regard with just contempt, and occasionally to deride with inimitable humour, the vanity of those useless and shadowy speculations. He acknowledged with the pious Anaxagoras, the superintending mind, whose providence regulated the operations of nature, as well as the affairs of human life. He denied not the existence of those inferior intelligences, which formed the only objects of popular adoration; he allowed the divine origin of dreams and omens; he was exemplary in all the re-

* Laert. l. ii. art. Socrat.

† Plato & Xenoph. in Symp.

‡ Plato in Theætet. & in Menon.

ligious duties of his country ; and were we to judge the Athenian sage by the standard of ordinary men, we should be inclined to believe that he had not entirely escaped the contagion of superstition ; since he professed to be accompanied by a *dæmon*, or invisible conductor, who often restrained his passions, and influenced his behaviour.* If this assertion was not an affect of that refined *irony* familiar to Socrates, we must allow his temper to have been tinged with credulity ; yet, whoever seriously reflects on a life of seventy years, spent in the service of mankind, uniformly blameless, and terminated by a voluntary death, in obedience to the unjust laws of his country ; whoever considers attentively the habitual temperance, the unshaken probity, the active usefulness, the diffusive beneficence, the constant equanimity and cheerfulness of this singular man, will admit a degree of enthusiasm, rather as the ornament, than defect, of such an extraordinary character. Men of learning and genius, who, examining the matter still more deeply, have observed the important revolution produced by the life and death of Socrates, on the principles and sentiments of his contemporaries and of posterity, are disposed to believe that such an extraordinary phenomenon could not have appeared in the moral world, without the particular interposition of heaven. The cheerful serenity of his last moments,† and still more, the undeviating tenor of his active virtue, justified the hardest maxims of Lycurgus and Pythagoras ; while the main aim of his speculations was to establish the sublime morality of those sages on the clearest deductions of reason and experience.

From the perfections of the supreme intelligence, His philosophy. he deduced his just government of the universe, which implied the immortality of the human soul. But the great object of his research was to discover those general laws by which, even in this life, the superintending providence had variously dispensed to men, good and evil, happiness and

* Plut. de Genio Socratis.

† This subject will be treated hereafter.

misery. These laws he regarded as the promulgated will of the God, with which, when clearly ascertained, it became our duty invariably to comply; since nothing but the most shortsighted folly could risk incurring the divine displeasure, in order to avoid pain or poverty, sickness or death; far less to enjoy perishing gratifications, which leave a sting behind them. Reasoning on such principles, and taking experience only for his guide, he deduced, with admirable perspicuity, the interests and duties of nations and individuals, in all the complicated relations of society. The actions of men furnished the materials, their instruction formed the object, their happiness was the end of his discourse. Wherever his lessons might be most generally useful, there he was always to be found; frequenting, at an early hour, the Academy, Lyceum, and other public *Gymnasia*; punctually attending the forum at mid-day, the hour of full assembly; and even at joining, without the affectation of austerity, in the convivial entertainments of his friends, or accompanying them in the delightful walks which adorned the banks of the Ilyssus. As a husband, a father, a citizen, and a soldier, the steady practice of his duty continually illustrated his doctrines. The conversation and example of this truly practical philosopher (and this is his highest panegyric) persuaded many of his fellow-citizens sincerely to embrace a virtuous course of life; and even those who, like Critias and Alcibiades, allowed the current of their passions to prevail over the conviction of their sober hours, were still charmed with the wonderful extent, as well as the singular accuracy, of his various knowledge; with the acuteness and penetration of his arguments; the beauty, vivacity, and persuasiveness of his style; which, whether he assumed the tone of reason or of ridicule, surpassed whatever had been deemed most eloquent.*

Assisted by
the tragic
poets,

Yet, how great soever might be the personal influence of Socrates, the triumph of his philosophy became more illustrious and complete, after his

* Xenoph. Memor. l. iv. c. xv. Laert. l. ii. c. xix. & seqq. & Cicero de Orat. iii. 16.

principles were embraced by those who cultivated the imitative arts, and directed the public amusements, which in all countries, but particularly Greece, have ever produced immediate and powerful effects on the national opinions and character. In Greece alone, the theatre was regarded as an object of the first importance and magnitude; it formed an essential, and by far the most splendid, part of religious worship; the expense of supporting it exceeded that of the army and navy together; and this celebrated entertainment, which united the tragedy and opera of the moderns, was carried to perfection by a favourite disciple of Socrates, particularly Euripides; whose works were so universally admired in Greece, that (as we shall have occasion to relate in the Sicilian war) the Syracusans released from captivity those Athenians, and those only, who had learned to repeat the verses of Euripides. This admired poet rendered the Grecian tragedy complete, by perfecting the chorus* the principal distinction between the ancient and the modern drama, who perfected the chorus. and which, when properly conducted, rendered the former more regular, yet more varied; more magnificent, and at the same time more affecting; above all, more interesting and more instructive.

From the prevailing manners of the times, when the principal citizens lived together in crowds, and daily frequented the public halls, the *gymnasia*, the forums, and temples, it was natural to expect that the action of a Grecian tragedy, should consist in some great public event, which interested the whole body of the people. The scene was usually the portico of a

* In this part of the drama, the philosophy of Euripides excels the loftiness of *Æschylus*, and the richness of *Sophocles*. It is sufficient to compare the works of the three rivals, to perceive that the chorus in Euripides most faithfully answers the description of Horace:

Ille bonis faveatque, & consilietur amicis,
 Et regat iratos, & amet peccare timentes.
 Ille dapes laudet mensæ brevis, ille salubrem
 Justitiam, legesque, & apertis otia portis;
 Ille tegat commissæ; deosque precetur & oret,
 Ut redeat miseriis, abeat fortuna superbis.

temple, the gate of a palace, the wide expanse of a forum, or market-place. In such places many spectators must be supposed present, who would naturally take part in an action which concerned the public interest and happiness.* On this principle was introduced the ancient chorus, consisting of such persons as most properly suited the occasion, and who, though not immediately or principally concerned in the catastrophe, had such general and indirect interest, as kept them continually on the scene, and made them approve or condemn, promote or oppose, the sentiments and measures of the actors. The chorus, never quitting the stage, necessarily introduced the unity of place; and as their songs and dances between the acts expressed the feelings excited by the representation, they connected the preceding act with that which immediately followed it, and rendered the whole spectacle uninterrupted and continuous. The music of the chorus was more rich and various and the poetry more elevated and glowing, than what could be admitted into the acts, or ordinary dialogue, which was confined to the iambic measure, circumstances which, together with the numbers, the dresses, the dances, and gestures, of these fancied spectators, equally increased the magnificence and variety of the entertainment. They likewise rendered it more affecting; since nothing is more proper to interest us in any scene, than the beholding a great number of persons deeply engaged by it, and expressing their feelings by natural tones and movements. But the principal advantage of the

* In the *Oedipus Tyrannus*, the chorus is composed of priests, senators, Theban youths, &c. Creon says to Oedipus,

Εἰ τῶνδε χρηεῖς πλησιάζοντων κλυεῖν,
Ἐτοιμός εἰπὼν εἴτε καὶ γείχην εἶω.

The answer is,

Εἰ πάντας αὐδα, τῶνδε γὰρ πλεον φέρω
Πενθος ἢ καὶ σῆς ἐμῆς ψυχῆν περι.

CREON. Shall I speak in presence of this numerous assembly? or shall we retire?

OEDIPUS. Speak before all present; for the public distress afflicts me more than my own danger.

chorus was to furnish the poet with an opportunity (without loading the dialogue, and rendering it too sententious) of enforcing, by all the power of fancy and of numbers, that moral instruction, which was occasionally attempted by Æschylus and Sophocles, but which forms the continual end and aim of Euripides, who had a soul to feel, and a genius to express, whatever is most lovely and most excellent in sentiment and character. It is unnecessary to mention the affecting delicacy of Admetus and his attendants towards their guest Hercules; the lively emotions of gratitude in that hero; the friendship of Pylades and Orestes; the amiable picture of conjugal affection in the character of Alcestis, since the whole remains of that inestimable writer prove his unceasing labours to warm his countrymen with all the virtues and charities that adorn private life, as well as to keep alive an ardent love of the republic, and a generous passion for its glory and liberty; while, in several passages, he describes and refutes the philosophy of Epicurus* (which, as we have already observed, was chiefly borrowed from the licentious maxims of the Sophists) with such fulness and accuracy as entitled him to the appellation of the Philosophic Tragedian.

That Euripides, though ten years older than Socrates, owed the characteristic excellences of his works to the conversation and friendship of that unrivalled moralist, is universally acknowledged by antiquity;† though the character and

His views counteracted by the authors of the old comedy.

* See particularly *Alcest.* ver. 782, &c. and ver. 960, &c.

Euripides flourished near an hundred years before Epicurus and Zeno, the respective founders of the Epicurean and Stoical philosophy. Yet we find the tenets of both sects in the Tragedian; which may be easily explained, by considering that those opposite kinds of philosophy arose from different aspects of nature, which must often present themselves to an observing eye; and, as the doctrines of the Sophists laid the foundation for the immoral system of Epicurus, so the moderate doubt of Socrates, and the old academy, was corrupted into different degrees of scepticism, according to the fancy of their successors: and his rational preference of virtue to all other objects, degenerated into a pretended contempt for these objects, as things totally indifferent, the insensibility and pedantry of the Stoics.

† *Εδοξε συμποσιον Ευριπιδη.* Diogen. Laert. in Vit. Socrat. The comic

intentions both of the poet and the philosopher were grossly misrepresented by some of their contemporaries. Before the commencement, and during the continuance of the Peloponnesian war, there flourished at Athens a class of men who were the declared enemies, not only of Socrates and his disciples, but of all order and decency. The reader will easily perceive, that I allude to Aristophanes, and the other writers of the old licentious comedy; an entertainment which was never carried to the same vicious excess in any other age or country. Yet this hideous spectre was the sister of tragedy, whose angelic sweetness and dignity were long accompanied by this odious and disgusting form; but to understand the natural connexion between objects seemingly so different, it is necessary to remount to their source.

History of
that licen-
tious enter-
tainment.

Tragedy, the song of the goat,* and Comedy, the song of the village, sufficiently indicate by the meanness of their ancient names, the humility of their first original. They arose amidst the sacrifices and joyous festivity of the vintage, in a country which seldom adopted the amusements, any more than the arts and

poets, who envied and hated Euripides, as the darling of the public, pretended that Socrates had even composed all the finest passages in his tragedies. Soon after the representation of the Troes, Mnesilochus parodied it in a farce, which he called Φρυγες, Phrygians, probably to have an opportunity of playing on the word Φρυγανον, fuel.

Φρυγεις εσι καινον δραμα τουτ' Ευριπιδου
'Ω και Σωκρατης τα φρυγανα υποτιθησι.

"The Phrygians is a new play of Euripides, to whom Socrates furnishes the fuel." But the pun cannot be translated. The same Mnesilochus calls Euripides a sort of hammerman to Socrates.

Ευριπιδης Σωκρατογομ φευς.

* A goat, as the particular enemy of the vine, was very properly sacrificed to Bacchus, whose praises composed the song. In the Antigoné of Sophocles, v. 1127,

Πολυνυμμε Καδμειας
Νυμφας αγαλμα, και Διος
Βαρυβρεμετα λενος, &c.

we have a specimen of what formed the first business of tragedy.

institutions, of others, but which was destined to communicate her own to all the civilized portion of mankind. During the entertainments of a season peculiarly dedicated to recreation and pleasure, the susceptible minds of the Greeks naturally yielded to two propensities, congenial to men in such circumstances, a disposition to exercise their sensibility, and a desire to amuse their fancy. Availing himself of the former, the sublime genius of Æschylus*, improved the song of the goat into a regular dramatic poem, agreeing with the Iliad and Odyssey in those unalterable rules of design and execution which are essential to the perfection of every literary performance, yet differing from those immortal archetypes of art, in a circumstance naturally suggested by the occasion for which tragedies were composed. It had been usual with the Athenians, when they celebrated in the spring and autumn the great festivals of Bacchus, to personate the exploits and fables handed down by immemorial tradition concerning that bountiful divinity: this imitation was considered as a mark of gratitude due to the beneficence of the god, to whose honours they associated the kindred worship of Pan, Silenus, and their attendant fawns and satyrs. When Æschylus represented, therefore, instead of simply reciting the real history or agreeable fictions, of antiquity, he only adopted a mode of imitation already practised in the religious ceremonies of his country; a mode of imitation more powerful than the epic, since, instead of barely describing the deeds of gods and heroes, it shows those distinguished personages on the stage, makes them speak and act for themselves, and thus approaching nearer to reality, is still more forcible and affecting.

* Æschylus is said by Aristotle (*de Arte Poetica*) to have introduced interlocutors, dialogues &c. which is acknowledging him the father of tragedy. We know little of Thespis, but from Horace:

Ignotum tragicæ genus invenisse camænæ

Dicitur, et plaustris vexisse poemata Thespis.

The plaustrum, however, has a more direct reference to comedy; since *λαλεῖν ὡς ἐξ ἀμαξῆς*, to speak as from a cart, was a common Greek expression for gross indecent railery.

Its characteristics, as distinguished from tragedy,

.As tragedy was introduced in imitation of the more serious scenes of the Dionysian festival, so comedy, which soon followed it, was owing to the more light and ludicrous parts of that solemnity.*

Tragedy is the imitation of an important and serious action, adapted to affect the sensibility of the spectators, and to gratify their natural propensity to fear, to weep, and to wonder. Comedy is the imitation of a light and ludicrous action, calculated to amuse the fancy, and to gratify the natural disposition of men to laughter and merriment. Terror and pity have in all ages been regarded as the main springs of tragedy, because the laws of sensibility, founded solely in nature, are always the same. Comedy has been infinitely varied by the innumerable modes of wit, humour, and ridicule, which prevailed in different ages and countries, and which agree scarcely in any one particular, unless it may be reckoned an agreement, that men have seldom indulged them, except at the expense of their good nature, and often of their virtue. The Grecian comedy was uncommonly licentious; the profligate characters of Aristophanes and his contemporaries, Mnesilochus, Callias, Eupolis, and Cratinus, contributed, doubtless, to this deformity; yet these poets could not easily have rendered their new entertainment agreeable to the taste and prejudices of the public, without incorporating in them

* Horace is authentic, and the most agreeable authority;

*Agricolæ prisci, fortes, parvoque beati,
Condita post frumenta, levantes tempore festo
Corpus, & ipsum animum spe fines dura ferentem,
Cum sociis operum, pueris, et conjuge fidâ,
Tellurem porco, Silvanum lacte piabant,
Floribus et vino Genium, memorem brevis ævi.
Fescennina per hunc invecta licentia morem
Versibus alternis opprobria rustica fudit, &c. &c.*

Epist. i. l. ii. v. 146; and still more directly Art. Poet. v. 520.

† Horace has expressed, with his usual felicity, the situation of the spectators, and the fatal necessity of humouring it:

—Asper,
Incolumi gravitate, jocum tentavit; eo quod

the substance of the *phallic* songs,* which constituted an ancient and essential part of the amusements of the vintage. The fond admirers of antiquity have defended the abominable strains of these licentious poets, by pretending that their intention was to reform vice, not to recommend it; an apology, which, if admitted, might tend to exculpate the writers, but could never justify their performances, since it is known by experience, that ~~low~~ descriptions prove a poison rather than a remedy; and instead of correcting manners, serve only to corrupt them.

Besides the general licentiousness of the ancient comedy, its more particular characteristics resulted from the peculiar circumstances of the Athenians, during the time of its introduction and continuance. The people of all ranks at Athens were then too deeply engaged in the military and political transactions of their country, to enjoy any amusement which did not either directly flatter their passions, or bear an immediate relation to the great and important interests of the republic. It was during the confusion and calamities of the Peloponnesian war, that all the comic pieces which remain were originally represented; a period too disorderly and tumultuous to relish comedies, such as are now written, or such as were composed in Greece by Menander, in an age of greater moderation and tranquillity. The elegant and ingenious, the moral and instructive strains of Moliere or Menander, may amuse the idleness of wealth, and the security of peace. But amidst the fermentation of war and danger, amidst civil dissensions and foreign invasions, the minds of men are too little at ease to enjoy such refined and delicate beauties, which then appear lifeless and insipid. In such turbulent circumstances, the reluctant attention must be excited by real, instead of imaginary characters; by a true,

and from
modern
comedy.

Illecebris erat & grata novitate morandus

Spectator, functusque sacris, & potus & exlex.

† Φαλλος, Priapus; ξύλον επιμηχες εχων εν τω αερω στυγιων αιδουον. Suidas.

This was carried in procession, accompanied with the *Φαλλικα ασματα*.

instead of a fictitious event; by direct and particular advice concerning the actual state of their affairs, instead of vague or abstract lessons of wisdom and virtue. Coarse buffoonery may often force them to laugh; delicate ridicule will seldom persuade them to smile; they may be affected by the sharpness of personal invective, but will remain impenetrable to the shafts of general satire.

General
notion of
the pieces
of Aristophanes.

By combining the different parts of this description, we may form a tolerably exact notion of the writings of Aristophanes, which commonly conceal, under a thin allegorical veil, the recent history of some public transaction, or the principal features of some distinguished character, represented in such a ludicrous light, as reflects on those concerned, unexpected, and often unmerited, but not therefore the less striking, flashes of insolent ridicule. Such was the nature, and such the materials of the ancient comedy, which, in its form, agreed entirely with tragedy, having borrowed from this entertainment (which was already in possession of the theatre) the design of the whole, as well as the configuration of the several parts; the music, the chorus, the dresses, decorations, and machinery; all of which were so modified and burlesqued as suited the purposes of the comic writer, and often rendered his pieces very exact parodies of the more fashionable tragedies of the times.

He and his
associates
encouraged
at Athens
by Pericles.

This singular species of drama, which, in its less perfect state, had long strolled the villages of Attica, was simply tolerated at Athens, until the profusion of Pericles, and his complaisance for the populace, first supplied from the exchequer the necessary expenses for the representation of comedies, and proposed prizes for the comic, as well as for the tragic, poets and actors. But, by this injudicious encouragement, he unwarily cherished a serpent in his bosom. Aristophanes and his licentious contemporaries having previously ridiculed virtue and genius, in the persons of Socrates and Euripides, boldly proceeded to avail themselves of the natural malignity of the vulgar, and their envy against whatever is elevated and illustrious, to

traduce and calumniate Pericles himself; and though his successors in the administration justly merited (as we shall have occasion to relate) the severest lashes of invective, yet, had their characters been more pure they would have been equally exposed to the unprovoked satire of those insolent buffoons, who gratified the gross appetites of the vulgar, by an undistinguished mass of ridicule, involving vice and virtue, things profane and sacred, men and gods.

Dramatic entertainments formed an essential part of the festivals consecrated to the bountiful author of the vine. Minerva, who had given not only the olive, but what was deemed far more valuable, her peculiar protection to the city of Athens, was rewarded with innumerable solemnities. Jupiter enjoyed his appropriate honours; but more commonly, as it is attested by Athenian medals, the worship of the father of the gods was associated with that of his wise and warlike daughter. We shall have occasion to speak more particularly of the festival and mysteries of Ceres, who taught the Athenians the important knowledge of Agriculture, which they were supposed to have diffused over the ancient world. It would be endless to mention the institutions in honour of the crowd of inferior or less propitious divinities, which rendered the festivals at Athens far more numerous than in any other Grecian city. Nor did their frequency abate any thing of the extensive splendour which accompanied them. The shops and courts of justice were shut; the mechanic quitted his tools, the husbandman ceased from his labours, the mourner intermitted his sorrow. The whole city was dissolved in feasting and jollity; the intervals of which were filled up by pompous shows and processions, by concerts of music, by exhibitions of painting; and at several festivals, particularly the Panathenæan, by hearing and judging the noblest productions of eloquence and poetry.* We shall have occasion to mention some particular ceremonies of a more

The Grecian festivals,

the splendour with which they were celebrated.

* Isocrat. Panegyr. & Panathen.

melancholy cast; but the general character of the Grecian religion was as cheerful and attractive, as the superstition of the Egyptians, from whom they are ignorantly supposed to have borrowed it, was gloomy and forbidding. Even the Egyptian hymns consisted in dismal complaints and lamentations;* the Grecian solemnities concluded with songs of joy and exultation. The feasts which followed the sacrifices were enriched by all the delicacies and luxuries of the ancient world; and, to use the words of Aristotle, many persons thought it their duty, at those religious entertainments, to get drunk in honour of the gods.†

Manners of
the Athenians in
private life.

It seems extraordinary, that the revenues of Athens, notwithstanding their improvement by Pericles, should have sufficed for this multitude of expenses. But we must consider that the general simplicity of manners in private life, formed a striking contrast with the extravagance of public festivals and amusements. The houses and tables of the most wealthy Athenians were little distinguished above those of their poorest neighbours. Pericles himself, though never suspected of avarice lived with the exactest economy; and the superabundance of private wealth, which would have created envy and danger to the owner, if he had employed it for his particular convenience and pleasure, procured him public gratitude and esteem when expended for the satisfaction of the multitude.

Condition
of the female
sex.

For reasons which will immediately appear, we have not hitherto found it necessary to describe the manners and influence of the Grecian women; but the character and condition of the fair sex will throw light on the preceding observations in this chapter, and present the most striking contrast of any to be met with in history. If we knew not the consideration in which women were anciently held in Greece, and the advantage which they enjoyed at Sparta, after the laws of Lycurgus had revived the institutions

* Apuleius de Genio Socratis.

† Aristot. Ethic. ad Nicom. l. viii. c. iii.

of the heroic ages,* we should be apt to suspect that the ungenerous treatment of the feebler sex, which afterwards so universally prevailed, had been derived from the Egyptian and Asiatic colonies, which early settled in that part of Europe. Excluded from social intercourse, which nature had fitted them to adorn, the Grecian women were rigorously confined to the most retired apartments of the family, and employed in the meanest offices of domestic economy. It was thought indecent for them to venture abroad, unless to attend a procession, to accompany a funeral,† or to assist at certain other religious solemnities. Even on these occasions, their behaviour was attentively watched, and often malignantly interpreted. The most innocent freedom was construed into a breach of decorum; and their reputation, once sullied by the slightest imprudence, could never afterwards be retrieved. If such unreasonable severities had proceeded from that absurd jealousy which sometimes accompanies a violent love, and of which a certain degree is nearly connected with the delicacy of passion between the sexes, the condition of the Grecian women, though little less miserable, would have been far less contemptible. But the Greeks were utter strangers to that refinement of sentiment,‡ which, in the ages of chivalry, and which still, in some southern countries of Europe, renders women the objects of a suspicious, but respectful passion, and leads men to gratify their vanity at the expense of their freedom. Married or unmarried, the Grecian females were kept in equal restraint: no pains were taken to render them, at any one period of their lives, agreeable members of society; and their education was either entirely neglected, or confined at least to such humble objects as, instead of elevating and enlarging the mind, tended only to narrow and to debase it.¶ Though neither qualified for holding an honourable rank in society, nor permitted to enjoy the company even of their

* Aristot. Politic. l. ii. p. 105.

† Lysias, p. 420.

‡ Idem, p. 435.

¶ See Aristotle's character of women. Hist. Animal. l. ix. c. 1.

nearest relations, they were thought capable of superintending or performing the drudgery of domestic labour, of acting as stewards for their husbands, and thus relieving men from a multiplicity of little cares, which seemed unworthy of their attention, and unsuitable to their dignity. The whole burden of such mercenary cares being imposed on the women, their first education and early habits were adapted to that lowly rank, beyond which they could never afterwards aspire.* Nothing was allowed to divert their minds from those servile occupations in which it was intended that their whole lives should be spent; no liberal idea was presented to their imagination, that might raise them above the ignoble arts in which they were ever destined to labour; the smallest familiarity with strangers was deemed a dangerous offence; and any intimacy or acquaintance beyond the walls of their own family, a heinous crime; since it might engage them to embezzle the furniture and effects committed to their care and custody. Even the laws of Athens confirmed this miserable degradation of women, holding the security of the husband's property a matter of greater importance than defending the wife's person from outrage, and protecting her character from infamy.† By such illiberal institutions were the most amiable part of the human species insulted, among a people in other respects the most improved of all antiquity. They were totally debarred from those refined arts and elegant entertainments, to which their agreeable qualities might have added a new charm. Instead of directing the taste, and enlivening the pleasures of society, their value was estimated, like that of the ignoblest objects, merely by profit or utility. Their chief virtue was reserve, and their point of honour, economy.

Grecian The extreme depression of women levelled the
courtezans; natural inequalities of their temper and disposi-

* Xenoph. Memorab. l. v. passim, particularly Socrates' Discourse with Ischomachus.

† See the laws, quoted by Lysias, explained in my Introductory Discourse to that orator, p. 100.

tion; the prude, the coquette, with the various intermediate shades of female character, disappeared; and all the modest and virtuous part of the sex (if virtue and modesty can ever be the effects of restraint) were reduced to humble imitation and insipid uniformity. But, in the time of Pericles there appeared and flourished at Athens a bolder class of females, who divested themselves of the natural modesty, disdained the artificial virtues, and avenged the violated privileges of their sex. Asia, the mother of voluptuousness, produced this dangerous brood, whose meretricious arts and occupations met with no check or restraint from the laxity of Ionian morals, and were even promoted and encouraged by the corruptions of Pagan superstition. In most of the Greek colonies of Asia, temples were erected to the *earthly* Venus; where courtezans were not merely tolerated, but honoured as priestesses of that condescending divinity.* The wealthy and commercial city of Corinth first imported this innovation from the East; and such is the extravagance of the human mind, that after the repulse of Xerxes, the magistrates of that republic ascribed the safety of their country to the powerful intercession of the votaries of Venus, whose portraits they caused to be painted at the public expense, as the Athenians had done those of the warriors who gained the battle of Marathon.† The fame of all those accomplished, but mercenary beauties, though highly celebrated by the poets and historians of the times, was eclipsed by the splendour of Aspasia of Miletus, who settled at Athens under the administration of Pericles, and is said to have embarked in the fleet with which that fortunate commander subdued the powerful and wealthy island of Samos. The personal character of Aspasia gave temporary lustre to a profession, which though exalted by the casual caprices of superstition, must, from its native odiousness, have fallen into disgrace, since later writers among the Greeks‡ acknowledge, that though she carried on

their artifices and influence.

* Athenæus, l. xiii. & Plutarch, p. 637.

† Simonides apud Athen. l. xiii.

‡ Plutarch. in Pericle.

a very dishonourable commerce in female virtue, yet her wit and eloquence, still more than her beauty, gained her extraordinary consideration among all ranks in the republic. The susceptible minds of the Athenians were delighted with what their absurd institutions rendered a novelty, the beholding the native graces of the sex, embellished by education. Aspasia is said to have acquired a powerful ascendant over Pericles himself; she certainly acquired his protection and friendship: which is less extraordinary than that her conversation and company should have pleased the discernment of the sage Socrates. She is accused (as we shall afterwards have an opportunity to mention) of having excited, from motives of personal resentment, the war of Peloponnesus; yet, calamitous as that long and obstinate conflict proved to Greece, and particularly to Athens, it may be suspected that Aspasia occasioned still more incurable evils to both. Her example, and still more her instructions, formed a seminary at Athens, by which her dangerous profession was reduced into method. The companions of Aspasia served as models for painting and statuary, and themes for poetry and panegyric. Nor were they merely the objects, but the authors of many literary works, in which they established rules for the behaviour of their lovers, particularly at table; and explained the various arts for gaining the heart, and captivating the affections,* which would have been in them an imprudence, had they not considered that the mysteries of *their* calling alone lose little by disclosure, since men may often perceive the snare, without having courage to avoid it. The dress, behaviour, and artifices of this class of women, became continually more seductive and dangerous; and Athens thenceforth remained the chief school of vice and pleasure as well as of literature and philosophy.

It has been already hinted, that the fine arts, and particularly painting, were prostituted to the honour of harlots, and the purposes of voluptuousness. Licentious pictures are men-

* Athenæus, *ibid.*

tioned by ancient writers as a general source of corruption, and considered as the first ambush that beset the safety of youth and innocence.* Yet this unhappy effect of the arts was only the vapour that accompanies the sun; since painting, architecture, and above all, statuary, attained their meridian splendour in the age of Pericles; and shed peculiar glory on this period of Athenian history, not only by the powers of genius which they displayed, but by the noble purposes to which they were directed. But the arts of design form so important a subject, that they merit to be examined apart in the following chapter.

* Euripid. in Hippolyt.

CHAP. XIV.

History of the Arts of Design.—Superiority of the Greeks in those arts.—Causes of that Superiority—Among the Asiatic Greeks—Who communicated their inventions to Europe.—Bathycles the Magnesians—Dipenus and Scyllis—Imitated in Greece, Italy and Sicily.—The Athenians surpass their Masters.—Sublime Style of Art.—Works of Phidias, Polygnotus, &c.—Characteristic Excellence of Grecian Art.—Different Impressions made by Painters and Poets—Depended on the Nature of their respective Arts.

History of
the arts of
design.

THAT the history of arts has been less cultivated than that of arms and politics, is a general and just complaint, to which writers will seldom be inclined to pay regard, because they will always find it an easier task to relate wars and negotiations, debates and battles, than to describe the gradual and almost imperceptible progress of genius and taste, in works of elegance and beauty.

The origin of the imitative* arts (so congenial is imitation to man) reaches beyond the limits of profane history; and to dispute who were their inventors, is only to examine what nation is the most ancient. In this respect, the Egyptians and Phœnicians merit, doubtless, the pre-eminence. From the earliest ages of Heathen antiquity, both these nations seem to have cultivated the arts of design. In the remotest periods of their history, the Egyptians engraved on precious stones, and

* Concerning the arts of the Greeks, the most copious materials are furnished by Pausanias throughout; and by the 34th and 35th books of Pliny. The best modern guides are Winckelman and Lessing in German, and Caylus in French. Many important errors of Winckelman are detected by the learned professor Heyne, in his *Antiquarische Abhandlungen*.

strove to render their public transactions immortal, by recording them in hieroglyphics, on the hardest bazaltes; nor can we sufficiently admire the perfection to which the patience of that laborious people had carried the mechanical part of sculpture, before the Persian conquest, and the reign of Cambyzes. But beauty, the essence and the end of art, was never studied by the natives of either Phœnicia or Egypt, who faithfully copied their national features, without attempting to improve them; until the traces of Grecian conquest and colonisation appeared in the medals of the Ptolemies, particularly those with the head of Jupiter Ammon.

Allowance, doubtless, must be made for the prejudices of national vanity, when Euripides, Aristotle, and Epicurus, endeavour to persuade us, that the clear skies, and happy temperature of Greece, engendered a peculiar aptitude for arts, letters, and philosophy. The testimony, however, of modern travellers confirms the evidence of antiquity, that the shores and islands of the Archipelago produce more elegant and liberal forms, and features more animated and expressive, with fewer individual perfections, and more of general nature, than can be found in any other divisions of the world.* Yet whatever the Greeks owed to their skies and climate, they were probably not less indebted to their laborious education and active mode of life, and to the manly spirit of their religious, civil, and military institutions. Long before the invasion of Xerxes, the Grecian sculpture was distinguished by an air of majesty peculiar to itself;† and the awful images of the gods, as yet rudely finished, displayed a grandeur and sublimity of expression, that delighted and astonished the best judges, in the most refined ages of art.‡

This singularity might be expected from the description already given of the religion and manners of Greece, and from the inimitable excellence

Superiority
of the
Greeks in
those arts.

Causes of
that superiority,

* Belon. Observat. l. ii. 34.

† Pausan. Corinth. l. ii. 34.

‡ Plato & Aristot. passim.

of its poet-musicians and poets. The divinities of Greece being imagined of the human form, though incomparably more noble and perfect, artists would naturally begin at a very early period,|| to exalt and generalize their conceptions. The bold enthusiasm of poetry served to elevate and support their flight, and the native country of Homer was the first scene of their success, the happy climate of Ionia rendering frequent and *natural*, in that delightful region, those beautiful and lovely forms which are elsewhere merely *ideal*, while other circumstances concurred to accelerate the progress of invention and genius in that highly-favoured country.

among the Asiatic Greeks; In the eighth century before the Christian æra, the Asiatic colonies, as we already had occasion to explain, far surpassed their mother country in splendour and prosperity. For this pre-eminence, they were indebted to the superior fertility of their soil, the number and convenience of their harbours, the advantages of their situation and climate, the vicinity of the most wealthy and refined nations in Asia; above all to their persevering diligence and ingenuity, by which they not only improved and ennobled the arts derived from the Lydians and Phrygians, but invented others long peculiar to themselves, particularly painting, sculpture in marble, together with the Doric and Ionic orders of Architecture.

who communicated their inventions to Europe. In the seventh century before Christ, the magnificent presents which the far-famed oracle of Apollo received from the superstition or vanity of the Lydian kings, were the productions, not of Egyptian or Phœnician, but of Ionian artists; and, during both that and the following century, the Ionians

|| We omit the fabulous account of Dedalus the Athenian, who is said to have flourished in the time of Hercules and Theseus, and forty years before the Trojan war. It has been already proved that, during the heroic ages, the Greeks paid no adoration to statues. Athenian writers, who lived a thousand years after that period, might easily confound the supposed works of the ancient Dedalus with those of Dedalus of Sycon, especially since the error was extremely flattering to their national vanity.

diffused the elegant inventions of their country through the dominions of their ancestors in Europe. Alarmed by the inroads of the Cimmerians, and disturbed by the continual hostility of Lydia, many eastern artists sought refuge in the commercial cities of Ægina, Sicyon, and Corinth, where the peaceful spirit of the inhabitants, comparatively wealthy and luxurious, afforded those ingenious strangers both encouragement and security.

The Asiatic fugitives, however, did not confine themselves to those secondary republics. Bathycles, a native of Ionian Magnesia, a place early celebrated for painting,* fixed his abode in Sparta, the most considerable community in Greece. By order of the magistrates of that illustrious republic, he made the throne of Amyclæan Apollo, the statue of Diana Leucophryné, the figures of the Graces and Horæ, and all the other gifts and ornaments inclosed within the consecrated ground surrounding the temple of Amyclæ. The statue of Apollo, thirty cubits high, seemed to be the work of an ignorant sculptor, and probably was the production of a far earlier age than that of Bathycles. But whoever considers the colossean bulk of the principal figure, the base of which was formed into an altar containing the tomb of Hyacinth, must admire the proportional magnitude of his throne, both sides of which were adorned with sculpture.† Among these ornaments, many subjects of history or fable are mentioned by Pausanias, which bear not any known relation to

Bathycles,
the Mag-
nesian.

The throne
of Amy-
clæan
Apollo.

* Plin. l. xxxv. I call it Ionian Magnesia, to distinguish it from other places of the same name. Vid. Plin. edit. Berolin. tom. i. p. 167. & tom. iii. p. 136, 139, and 255.

† Winkleman, who scarcely mentions the throne of Amyclæan Apollo, though undoubtedly the greatest ancient monument in Greece, confounds Bathycles the Magnesian with a later artist of the same name, who made the celebrated cup which the seven sages modestly sent one to the other, as most worthy of such a present, and which was finally consecrated to Delphian Apollo. Diogenes Laertius, speaking on this subject, says, Βαθυκλῆς τὸν Ἀπὸλλωνα Ἀρκάδα; and that he was an Arcadian appears also from Plut. in Solon. & Casaubon, ad Athenæum, l. xi. 4.

Apollo or Hyacinth, to Bathycles or the Spartans; but the top of the throne contained a chorus of Magnesians, supposed to represent the artists who assisted in the execution of this stupendous work. The altar represented a celestial group; Minerva, Venus, Diana, and several other divinities, conveying Hyacinth to the skies. Its sides were adorned with the combat of Tyndareus and Eurytus; the exploits of Castor and Pollux; and the extraordinary scene between Menelaus and the Egyptian Proteus, as described in the *Odyssey*.* Nor was this the only subject copied from the divine bard. It was easy to distinguish his favourite Demodocus singing among a chorus of Phæacians; a circumstance confirming our observations in a former part of this work, that the poems of Homer were generally known in Sparta long before they had been collected by the Athenian tyrant Pisistratus.

Nearly six centuries before the Christian æra, Dipenus and Scillus. the Cretans, Dipenus and Scillus, adorned many Grecian cities in Europe as well as in Asia; and about fifty years afterwards, the Chians, Bupalus and Anthermus, diffused over Greece those precious works in Parian marble, which were highly admired in the age of Augustus.† About the same time, Polydorus of Samos, who seems to have been much employed by Cræsus, the last king of Lydia, made the famous ring for the Samian tyrant Polycrates, which is extolled by Pliny‡ as a master-piece of art.

Their works imitated in Greece, Italy, and Sicily. The productions of those Eastern artists were imitated with successful emulation by their disciples in ancient Greece, and likewise by the Grecian colonies in Italy and Sicily; as sufficiently appears from the medals of these last-mentioned countries.

These more durable monuments, however, can afford but an imperfect idea of the innumerable statues which were formed of tuf or gravel stone,|| and of various kinds of wood. The most esteemed were made of ivory, which, like the teeth of

* Pausan. Lacon. p. 196, & seqq.

† L. xxxvii. § 4.

† Vid. Plin. l. xxxvi. § 4.

|| Plut. in Vit. Andoc.

other animals, calcines under ground ; an unfortunate circumstance for the arts, since, before the invasion of Xerxes, Greece could boast an hundred ivory statues of the gods, all of a colossean magnitude, and many of them covered with gold.* The white marbles of Paros, together with those of Cyprus and Ægina, furnished the chief materials for sculpture, before the Athenians opened the hard sparkling veins of mount Pentelicus. Ebony, cypress, and other kinds of wood, were gradually brought into use, in consequence of the more general diffusion of the art, which was destined not only to represent gods and heroes, but to commemorate the useful merit of illustrious citizens.† At the four sacred festivals common to the Grecian name, the victors in the gymnastic exercises, as well as in the musical and poetical entertainments, were frequently distinguished by the honour of a statue. The scenes of those admired solemnities, thus became the principal repositories of sculpture ; and the cities of Delphi and Olympia, in particular, long surpassed the rest of Greece in the number and value of their statues, as well as in the splendour and magnificence of all their other ornaments.‡

But the time approached when these cities themselves were to be eclipsed by the lustre of Athens, which, in the course of forty years, became the seat not only of opulence, power, and politics, but of literature, philosophy, and the fine arts, and thenceforth continued to be deemed the sovereign of Greece, rather than the capital of the narrow and unfruitful territory of Attica. During that memorable period, the Athenians, whose circumstances had hitherto proved little favourable to the progress of taste and elegance, acquired unrivalled power and renown. Having defeated and disgraced the arms, they plundered the wealth of Persia. Their valour gave them possession of those maritime provinces of Lower Asia, which were justly regarded as the cradle of the arts. Their magnanimity and firmness

The Athenians surpass their masters.

* Pausanias.

† Lucian. Imagin.

‡ Pausanias Phocic. and Eliac.

commanded respect abroad, and ensured pre-eminence in Greece; while, by a rare felicity, their republic, amidst this uninterrupted flow of external prosperity, produced men qualified to improve the gifts of valour or fortune to the solid and permanent glory of their country.

Athenian
artists,

It is difficult to determine whether the discerning encouragement of Pericles was more useful in animating the industry of Phidias, or the genius of Phidias in seconding the views of his illustrious protector. Their congenial minds seemed as happily formed for each other, as both were admirably adapted to the flourishing circumstances of their country. In the language of Plutarch,* this great minister, whose virtues gradually rendered him the master of the republic, found Athens well furnished with marble, brass, ivory, gold, ebony, and cypress, together with all the other materials, fitted to adorn a city, which, having raised to the glory of

conspire
with the
views of
Pericles.

empire, he wished farther to immortalize as the model of elegance. According to the popular principles which he professed, he deemed it the duty of a statesman to provide not merely for the army, the navy, the judges, and others immediately employed in the public service: the great body of the people he regarded as the constant and most important object of his ministerial care. The immense revenues of the state, which had hitherto been chiefly squandered in shows and festivals, in gaudy ostentation and perishing luxury, he directed to objects more solid and durable, which while they embellished the city, might exercise the industry and display the talents of the citizens. Guided by such motives, he boldly opened the treasury, and expended about four thousand talents; a sum which then might command as much labour as six or seven millions sterling in the present age. By this liberal encouragement, he animated every art, excited every hand, enlivened every exertion, and called forth into the public service the whole dexterity, skill, and genius of his countrymen; while the motives

* Plut. in Pericle.

of gain or glory which he proposed, allured from all quarters the most ingenious strangers, who readily transported their talents to Athens, as to the best market, and most conspicuous theatre.

But it was the peculiar felicity of Pericles, to find Athens provided not only with all the materials of art, but with artists capable of employing them to the best advantage. In the inaccurate, but often expressive, language of Pliny, sculpture and painting then first arose, under the plastic hands of Phidias and his brother Panæus. Both arts, however, are known to have existed at an earlier date; but in the age of Pericles, they first assumed their proper elevation and due honours. The inventive genius of man tried a new and nobler flight. The superiority of Phidias and his contemporaries obscured, and almost obliterated, the memory of their predecessors, and produced that sublime style of art, which, having flourished about an hundred and fifty years, decayed with the glory of Greece, and disappeared soon after the reign of Alexander.

It appears from the gems and medals, and the few remains in marble, preceding the age of Pericles, that the mechanical part of engraving and sculpture had already attained a high degree of perfection. In many of those works, the minutest ornaments are finished with care, the muscles are boldly pronounced, the outline is faithful; but the design has more hardness than energy, the attitudes are too constrained to be graceful, and the strength of the expression distorts, and for the most part destroys, beauty. The sculptors Phidias, Polycletes, Scopas, Alcamenes, and Myron, together with the contemporary painters, Panæus, Zeuxis, and Parrhasius, softened the asperities of their predecessors,* rendered their contours more flowing and more natural, and by employing greater address to conceal the mechanism of their art, displayed superior skill to the judgment and afforded higher delight to the fancy, in pro-

Sublime
style of art,

compared
with that
preceding
it.

* Plut. in Pericl. & Quintilian, l. xii. c. x. p. 578.

portion as less care and labour appeared visible to the eye. In the works of these admired artists, the expression was skilfully diffused through every part, without disturbing the harmony of the whole. Pain and sorrow were rather concentrated in the soul than displayed on the countenance; and even the more turbulent passions of indignation, anger, and resentment, were so tempered and ennobled, that the indications of them became consistent with attractive grace and sublime beauty. But the triumph of art consisted in representing and recommending the social affections; for setting aside the unwarranted assertions of Pliny, in his pretended epochs of painting, it appears from much higher authority, that as early as the age of Socrates, painters had discerned and attained that admired excellence of style, which has been called in modern times the manner of Raphael; and had learned to express, by the outward air, attitudes, and features, whatever (in the words of Xenophon*) is most engaging, affectionate, sweet, attractive, and amiable, in the inward sentiments and character. Of these Grecian paintings, indeed, which were chiefly on wood, and other perishing materials, no vestige remains; but the statuary of that celebrated age, while it displays its own excellence, is sufficient to redeem from oblivion (as far at least as invention, expression, and ideal beauty, are concerned) the obliterated charms of the sister art.

The works
of Phidias.
Olymp.
lxxxiii. 4.
A. C. 445.

In statuary, the superior merit of Phidias was acknowledged by the unanimous admiration of independent and rival communities. Intrusted by Pericles with the superintendence of the public works, his own hands added to them their last and most valuable ornaments. Before he was called to this honourable employment, his statues had adorned the most celebrated temples of Greece. His Olympian Jupiter we had already occasion to describe. In the awful temple of Delphi, strangers

* See the conversation of Socrates with the painter Parrhasius, in Memorab. l. iii.

admired his bronze statues of Apollo and Diana. He likewise made for the Delphians a group of twelve Grecian heroes, surrounding a figure of brass, that represented the Trojan horse. His admired statue of the goddess Nemesis, or Vengeance, was formed from a block of marble, which the vain confidence of the Persians transported to Marathon for a trophy of victory, but which their disgraceful and precipitate flight left for a monument of their cowardice on the Marathonian shore. The grateful piety of Greece adored his Venus Urania, and Parthenopean Apollo. His three Minervas were respectively made for the Pallenians, Platæans and Lemnians; and all three were presented by those tributary states to their Athenian protectors and sovereigns. These inimitable works silenced the voice of envy. The most distinguished artists of Greece; sculptors, painters, and architects, were ambitious to receive the directions, and to second the labours, of Phidias, which were uninterruptedly employed during fifteen years, in the embellishment of his native city.

A. C. 455—
430.

The Ode-
um, Parthe-
non, and
Propylæa.

During that short period he completed the Odeum, or theatre of music; the Parthenon, or temple of Minerva; the Propylæa, or vestibule, and porticos belonging to the citadel, together with the sculptured and picturesque ornaments of these and other immortal works; which, when new (as Plutarch finely observes,) expressed the mellowed beauties of time and maturity; and when old, still preserved the fresh charms and alluring graces of novelty. The Parthenon, which still remains, attests the justice of this panegyric. It is two hundred and seventeen feet nine inches long, composed of beautiful white marble, and acknowledged by modern travellers* to be the noblest piece of antiquity existing in the world. It appears at first sight extraordinary, that the expense of two thousand talents should have been bestowed on the Propylæa.† But

* Sir George Wheeler's Travels, &c.

† Plutarch. in Pericle. & Demosth. p. 71,

we must consider, that this extensive name comprehended the temple of Minerva, the treasury and other public edifices.

Works of
Panæus,
Polygnotus,
and Micon.

The Pœcile, or diversified portico, which was painted by Panæus, the brother of Phidias, assisted by Polygnotus and Micon, must have been a work of great time and expense. Its front and ceilings were of marble, like those of all the other porticos leading to the citadel, which still remained in the time of Pausanias, and were regarded, both on account of the workmanship and materials, as superior to any thing extant. In the Pœcile, those great painters, whose merit Pliny* forgets in his inaccurate epochs of art, had represented the most illustrious events of Grecian history; the victory of Theseus over the Amazons, the sacking of Troy, and particularly the recent exploits against the Persians. In the battle of Marathon, the Athenian and Platæan heroes were drawn from the life, or more probably from the innumerable statues which preserved the faithful lineaments of such admired patriots. The whole extent of the Acropolis, above six miles in circumference, was so diversified by works of painting and statuary, that it is described as exhibiting one continued scene of elegance and beauty.

The Minerva in the
Acropolis.

But all these ornaments were surpassed by one production of Phidias, which probably was the last of that great master. His admired statue of Minerva, the erecting of which served to consecrate the Parthenon, was composed of gold and ivory, twenty-six cubits high, being of inferior dimensions to his Minerva Poliades of bronze, the spear and crest of which was seen from the promontory of Sunium,† at twenty-five miles distance. Parrhasius had painted the ornaments of the latter;‡ Phidias himself adorned every part of the former; and the compliment which, in his favourite work, he took an opportunity of paying to the

* He places the first epoch of great painters in the 90th Olymp. A. C. 420.

† Pausanias Attic.

‡ Idem, *ibid.*

merit of Pericles, occasioned (as we shall have occasion to explain,)* his own banishment, a disgrace which he seems not to have long survived. Cicero, Plutarch, Pliny, and Pausanias, had seen and admired this invaluable monument of piety, as well as genius, since the Minerva of Phidias increased the devotion of Athens towards her protecting divinity. It belonged only to those who had seen and studied, to describe such master-pieces of art; and as they exist no more, it will better suit the design of this history to confine ourselves to such works as we ourselves have seen, and which are generally acknowledged to bear the impression of the Socratic age, when philosophy gave law to painting and sculpture, as well as to poetry and eloquence.

Were it allowed to make the melancholy supposition, that all the monuments of Grecian literature had perished in the general wreck of their nation and liberty, and that posterity could collect nothing farther concerning this celebrated people, but what appeared from the Apollo Belvidere, the groupes of the Laocoon and Niobé, and other statues, gems, or medals, now scattered over Italy and Europe, what opinion would mankind form of the genius and character of the Greeks? would it correspond with the impressions made by their poets, orators, and historians? which impression would be most favourable? and what would be the precise difference between them? The solution of these questions will throw much light on the present subject.

Character-
istic excel-
lence of
Grecian art.

The first observation that occurs on the most superficial, and that is strongly confirmed by a more attentive survey of the ancient marbles is, that their authors perfectly understood proportion, anatomy, the art of clothing without concealing, the naked figure, and whatever contributes to the justness and truth of design. The exact knowledge of form is as necessary to the painter or statuary, whose business it is to represent

Circum-
stances in
which it
agreed with
poetry and
eloquence.

* Plutarch. in Peric. & Thucyd. l. ii.

bodies, as that of language to the poet or historian who undertakes to describe *actions*. In this particular, it would be unnecessary to institute a comparison between Grecian writers and Grecian artists, since they are both acknowledged as perfect in their respective kinds, as the condition of humanity renders possible.

The expression of passions, sentiments and character, in the works of poets and orators;

But when we advance a step farther, and consider the expression of passions, sentiments, and character, we find an extraordinary difference, or rather contrariety. Homer, Sophocles, and Demosthenes, are not only the most original, but the most animated and most glowing of all writers.

Every sentence is energetic; all the parts are in motion, the passions are described in their utmost fury, and expressed by the boldest words and gestures. To keep to the tragic poet, whose art approaches the nearest to painting and sculpture, the heroes, and even the gods of Sophocles, frequently display the impetuosity of the most ungoverned natures; and, what is still more extraordinary, sometimes betray a momentary weakness, extremely inconsistent with their general character. The rocks of Lemnos resound with the cries of Philoctetes; Oedipus yielding to despair, plucks out his eyes; even Hercules, the model of fortitude, sinks under the impressions of pain or sorrow.

in those of painters and statues;

Nothing can be more opposite to the conduct of Grecian artists. *They* likewise have represented Philoctetes; but instead of effeminate tears and degrading lamentations, have ascribed to him the patient concentrated wo of a suffering hero. The furious Ajax of Timomachus was painted, not in the moment when he destroyed the harmless sheep instead of the hostile Greeks, but after he had committed this mad deed, and when his rage having subsided, he remained, like the sea after a storm, surrounded with the scattered fragments of mangled carcasses, and reflecting with the silent anguish of despair on his useless and frantic brutality. The revenge of Medea against her husband was not represented, as in Euripides, butchering

her innocent children, but while she was still wavering and irresolute, agitated between resentment and pity. Even Clytemnestra, whose unnatural, intrepid cruelty, poets and historians had so indignantly described and arraigned, was not deemed a proper subject for the pencil, when imbruing her hands in the blood of Agamemnon. And although this may be referred to a rule of Aristotle, "that the characters of women should not be represented as too daring or too decisive;" yet we shall find on examination, that it results from principles of nature, whose authority is still more universal and more imperious. The consideration of the Apollo, Niobé and Laocoon, whose copies have been infinitely multiplied, and are familiarly known, will set this matter in the clearest point of view.

The Apollo Belvidere is universally felt and acknowledged to be the sublimest figure that either skill can execute, or imagination conceive. That favourite divinity, whom ancient poets seem peculiarly fond of describing in the warmest colours,* is represented in the attitude of darting the fatal arrow against the serpent Pytho, or the giant Tityus. Animated by the boldest conception of heavenly powers, the artist has far outstepped the perfections of humanity, and (if we may speak without irreverence) made the corrupt put on incorruption, and the mortal immortality. His stature is above the human, his attitude majestic; the Elysian spring of youth softens the manly graces of his person, and the bold structure of his limbs. Disdain sits on his lips, and indignation swells his nostrils; but an unalterable serenity invests his front, and the sublime elevation of his aspect aspires at deeds of renown still surpassing the present object of his victory.

The irascible passions are not represented with more dignity in the Apollo, than are those of fear, terror, and consternation, in the Niobé. This group contained Niobé and her husband Amphion, with seven

illustrated
by the
Apollo Bel-
videre;

by the
group of
Niobé;

* Horace, b. iii. ode 4. ver. 60.

sons, and as many daughters. Their melancholy story, which is too well known* to be related here, required the deepest expression; and the genius of the artist has chosen the only moment when this expression could be rendered consistent with the highest beauty; a beauty not flattering the senses by images of pleasure, but transporting the fancy into regions of purity and virtue. The excess and suddenness of their disaster occasioned a degree of amazement and horror, which, suspending the faculties, involved them in that silence and insensibility, which neither breaks out into lamentable shrieks, nor distorts the countenance, but which leaves full play to the artist's skill in representing motion without disorder, or, in other words, in rendering expression graceful.

and by that
of the Lao-
coon.

The Laocoon may be regarded as the triumph of Grecian sculpture; since bodily pain, the grossest and most ungovernable of all our passions, and that pain united with anguish and torture of mind, are yet expressed with such propriety and dignity, as afford lessons of fortitude more impressive than any taught in the schools of philosophy. The horrible shriek, which Virgil's Laocoon† emits, is a proper circumstance for poetry, which speaks to the fancy by images and ideas borrowed from all the senses, and has a thousand ways of ennobling its object; but the expression of this shriek would have totally degraded the statue. It is softened, therefore, into a patient sigh, with eyes turned to heaven in search of relief. The intolerable agony of suffering nature is represented in the lower part, and particularly in the extremities, of the body; but the manly breast struggles against calamity. The contention is still more plainly perceived in his furrowed forehead; and his languishing paternal eye demands assistance, less for himself, than for his miserable children, who look up to him for help.

Different
impression

If subjects of this affecting nature are expressed without appearing hideous, shocking, or disgusting,

* Ovid. Metamor. l. vi. ver. 146, & seqq.

† Æneid. l. ii. ver. 222.

we may well suppose that more temperate passions are represented with the greatest moderation and dignity. The remark is justified by examining the remains or faithful copies of Grecian art; and were we to deduce from these alone the character of the nation, it would seem at first sight, that the contemporaries of Pericles must have been a very superior people in point of fortitude, self-command, and every branch of practical philosophy; to the Athenians who are described by poets and historians.

made by the same objects, as exhibited by poets and painters,

But when we consider the matter more deeply, we shall find that it is the business of history to describe men as they are; of poetry and painting, to represent them as may afford most pleasure and instruction to the reader or spectator. The aim of these imitative arts is the same, but they differ widely in the mode, the object, and extent, of their imitation. The poet who describes *actions* in *time*, may carry the reader through all the gradations of passion; and in exhibiting its most furious excess his genius is most powerfully displayed. But the painter or statuary, who represents *bodies* in *space*, is confined to one moment, and must choose that which leaves the freest play to the imagination. This can seldom be the highest pitch of passion, which leaves nothing beyond it; and in contemplating which, the sympathy of the spectator, after his first surprise subsides, can only descend into indifference. Every violent situation, moreover, is perceived not to be durable; and all extreme perturbation is inconsistent with beauty, without which no visible object can long continue either powerfully attractive or highly pleasing.*

founded in the different nature of their respective arts.

* This subject is admirably treated in Lessing's *Laocoon*, in which he traces the *bounds* of painting and poetry; a work which, it is much to be regretted, that able critic did not finish.

CHAP. XV.

Causes of the Peloponnesian War.—Rupture between Corinth and its Colony Corcyra.—Sea Fight.—Insolence and Cruelty of the Corcyreans.—They provoke the Resentment of the Peloponnesians.—Obtain the Protection of Athens.—Are defeated by the Corinthians.—Who dread the resentment of Athens.—Their Scheme for rendering it impotent.—Description of the Macedonian Coast.—It revolts from Athens.—Siege of Potidæa.—General Confederacy against Athens.—Peloponnesian Embassy.—Its demands firmly answered by Pericles.—His Speech to the Athenians.—The Thebans surprise Platæa.—Preparations for war on both Sides.—Invasion of Attica.—Operations of the Athenian Fleet.—Plague in Athens.—Calamitous Situation of that Republic.—Magnanimity of Pericles.—Firmness of his last Advice.—His Death and Character.

Pericles
summons to
Athens de-
puties from
all the Gre-
cian repub-
lics.

BY the lustre of elegant arts, the magnificence of Pericles had displayed and ennobled the military glory of his country; and the pre-eminence of Athens seemed immoveably established on the solid foundation of internal strength, adorned by external splendour. But this abundant measure of prosperity satisfied neither the active ambition of the republic, nor the enterprising genius of its minister. The Greeks beheld and admired, but had not yet formally acknowledged, the full extent of the Athenian greatness. In order to extort this reluctant confession, than which nothing could more firmly secure to him the affectionate gratitude of his fellow-citizens, Pericles despatched ambassadors to the republics and colonies in Europe and in Asia, requiring the presence of their deputies in Athens, to concert measures for rebuilding their ruined temples, and for performing the solemn vows and sacrifices

promised with devout thankfulness, to the immortal gods, who had wonderfully protected the Grecian arms, during their long and dangerous conflict with the Persian empire. This proposal, which tended to render Athens the common centre of deliberation and of union, was readily accepted in such foreign parts as had already submitted to the authority of that republic. But in neighbouring states, the ambassadors of Pericles were received coldly, and treated disrespectfully; in most assemblies of the Peloponnesus they were heard with secret disgust, and the pride of the Spartan senate openly derided the insolence of their demands. When, at their return home, they explained the behaviour of the Spartans, Pericles exclaimed, in his bold style of eloquence, that he "beheld war advancing with wide and rapid steps from the Peloponnesus."*

Such was the preparation of materials which the smallest spark might throw into combustion. But before we relate the events which immediately occasioned the memorable war of twenty-seven years, it is impossible (if the calamities of our own times have taught us to compassionate the miserable) not to drop a tear over the continual disasters which so long and so cruelly afflicted the most valuable and enlightened portion of mankind, and whose immortal genius was destined to enlighten the remotest ages of the world. When rude illiterate peasants are summoned to mutual hostility, and, unaffected by personal motives of interest or honour, expend their strength and blood to gratify the sordid ambition of their respective tyrants, we may lament the general stupidity and wretchedness of human nature; but we cannot heartily sympathize with men who have so little sensibility, nor very deeply and feelingly regret, that those should suffer pain who seem both unwilling and unable to relish pleasure. Their heavy unmeaning aspect, their barbarous language, and more barbarous manners, together with their total indifference to the objects and pursuits which form

Introduction to the history of the Peloponnesian war.

* Plut. in. Pericle.

the dignity and glory of man ; these circumstances, interrupting the ordinary course of our sentiments, divert or repel the natural current of sympathy. Their victories or defeats are contemplated without emotion, coldly related, and carelessly read. But the war of Peloponnesus presents a different spectacle. The adverse parties took arms, not to support the unjust pretensions of a tyrant, whom they had reason to hate or to despise, but to vindicate their civil rights, and to maintain their political independence. The meanest Grecian soldier knew the duties of the citizen, the magistrate, and the general.* His life had been equally divided between the most agreeable amusements of leisure, and the most honourable employments of activity. Trained to those exercises and accomplishments which give strength and agility to the limbs, beauty to the shape, and grace to the motions, the dignity of his external appearance announced the liberal greatness of his mind ; and his language, the most harmonious and expressive ever spoken by man, comprehended all that variety of conception, and all those shades of sentiment, that characterize the most exalted perfection of human manners.

Magnitude
and impor-
tance of the
subject.

Ennobled by such actors, the scene itself was highly important, involving not only the states of Greece, but the greatest of the neighbouring kingdoms ; and, together with the extent of a foreign war, exhibited the intenseness of domestic sedition. As it exceeded the ordinary duration of human power or resentment, it was accompanied with unusual circumstances of terror, which, to the pious credulity of an unfortunate age, naturally announced the wrath of heaven, justly provoked by human cruelty. While pestilence and famine multiplied the actual sufferings, eclipses and earthquakes increased the consternation

* Such is the testimony uniformly given of them in the panegyric of Athens, by Isocrates, and confirmed by the more impartial authority of Xenophon, in the expedition of Cyrus. Their exploits in that wonderful enterprise justify the highest praise ; and yet the national character had rather degenerated than improved, in the long interval between the periods alluded to.

and horror of that lamentable period.* Several warlike communities were expelled from their hereditary possessions; others were not only driven from Greece, but utterly extirpated from the earth; some fell a prey to party rage, others to the vengeance of foreign enemies; some were slowly exhausted by the contagion of a malignant atmosphere, others overwhelmed at once by sudden violence; while the combined weight of calamity assailed the power of Athens, and precipitated the downfall of that republic from the pride of flowing prosperity, to the lowest ebb of dejection and misery.†

The general, but latent hostility of the Greeks, of which we have already explained the cause, was first called into action by a rupture between the ancient republic of Corinth, and its flourishing colony Corcyra. The haughty disdain of Corcyra, elated with the pride of wealth and naval greatness, had long denied and scorned those marks of deference and respect which the uniform practice of Greece exacted from colonies towards their mother country. At the Olympic and other solemn festivals, they yielded not the place of honour to the Corinthians; they appointed not a Corinthian high priest to preside over their religion; and when they established new settlements on distant coasts, they requested

Rupture
between
Corinth and
its colony
Coreyra.
Olymp.
lxxxv. 2.
A. C. 439.

* Thucyd. l. i. p. 16, & seqq.

† For the Peloponnesian war, we have not, indeed, a full stream of history, but a regular series of annals in Thucydides and Xenophon; authors, of whom each might say,

Quæque ipse miserrima vidi,
Et quorum pars magna fui:—————

Many material circumstances may likewise be learned from the Greek orators, the writings of Plato and Aristotle, the comedies of Aristophanes, the twelfth and two following books of Diodorus Siculus, and Plutarch's Lives of Pericles, Nicias, Alcibiades, Lysander, and Agesilaus. It is remarkable, that the heavy compiler, as well as the lively biographer, have both followed the long lost works of Ephorus and Theopompus, in preference to those of Thucydides and Xenophon; a circumstance which strongly marks their want of judgment, but which renders their information more interesting to posterity.

not, as usual with the Greeks, the auspicious guidance of a Corinthian conductor.*

The Corinthians protect Epidamnus.

While the ancient metropolis, incensed by those instances of contempt, longed for an opportunity to revenge them, the citizens of Epidamnus, the most considerable sea-port on the coast of the Adriatic, craved assistance at Corinth against the barbarous incursions of the Taulantii, an Illyrian tribe, who having united with a powerful band of Epidamnian exiles, greatly infested that territory, and threatened to storm the city. As Epidamnus was a colony of Corcyra, its distressed inhabitants had first sought protection there; but, although their petition was preferred with respectful deference, and urged with the most affecting demonstrations of abasement and calamity, by ambassadors who long remained under the melancholy garb of supplicants in the temple of Corcyrean Juno, the proud insensibility of these intractable islanders showed not the smallest inclination to relieve them; partly restrained, it is probable, by the secret practices of the Epidamnian exiles, consisting of some of the principal and richest families of that maritime republic. The Corinthians readily embraced the cause of a people abandoned by *their* natural protectors, and *their* own inveterate enemies; and immediately supplied Epidamnus with a considerable body of troops, less with a view to defend its walls against the assaults of the Taulantii, than in order irrecoverably to detach and alienate its inhabitants from the interests of Corcyra.

Are defeated at sea by the Corcyreans.
Olymp.
lxxxvi. 2.
A. C. 435.

The indignation of the Corcyreans was inflamed into fury, when they understood that those whom they had long affected to consider as aliens and as rivals, had interfered in the affairs of their colony. They instantly launched a fleet of forty sail, proceeded in hostile array to the harbour of Epidamnus, summoned the inhabitants to re-admit their

* Schol. in Thucyd. ad locum. He mentions the other circumstances which I have melted into the text, and which will afterwards be confirmed by more classic authority.

exiles, and to expel the foreign troops. With such unconditional and arbitrary demands, the weakest and most pusillanimous garrison could scarcely be supposed to comply. The Epidamnians rejected them with scorn; in consequence of which their city was invested and attacked with vigour, by land and sea. The Corinthians were now doubly solicitous, both to defend the place, and to protect the troops already thrown into it, consisting partly of their Leucadian and Ambracian allies, but chiefly of Corinthian citizens. A proclamation, first published at Corinth, was industriously disseminated through Greece, inviting all who were unhappy at home, or who courted glory abroad, to undertake an expedition to Epidamnus, with assurance of enjoying the immunities and honours of a republic whose safety they had ventured to defend. Many exiles and military adventurers, at all times profusely scattered over Greece, obeyed the welcome summons. Public assistance, likewise, was obtained, not only from Thebes and Megara, but from several states of the Peloponnesus. In this manner the Corinthians were speedily enabled to fit out an armament of seventy-five sail; which, directing its course towards Epidamnus, anchored in the Ambracian gulf, near the friendly harbour of Actium, where, in a future age, Augustus and Antony decided the empire of the Roman world. Near this celebrated scene of action, the impetuous Corcyreans hastened to meet the enemy. Forty ships were employed in the siege of Epidamnus. Twice that number sailed towards the Ambracian gulf. The hostile armaments fought with equal animosity; but the Corcyreans far surpassed in bravery and skill. Fifteen Corinthian vessels were destroyed; the rest escaped in disorder, and the decisive battle was soon followed by the surrender of Epidamnus. By a clemency little expected from the victors, the ancient inhabitants of the place were allowed their lives and liberties; but the Corinthians were made prisoners of war, and their allies condemned to death.

Epidamnus
surrenders
to the con-
querors.

Their insolence and cruelty,
A. C.
434—433,

The Corcyreans thanked their gods, and erected a conspicuous trophy of victory on the promontory Leucimné, whose lofty ridges overlooked the distant scene of the engagement. During the two following years, they reigned undisturbed masters of the neighbouring seas; and though a principle of fear, or perhaps a faint remnant of respect towards their ancient metropolis, prevented them from invading the territory of Corinth, they determined to make the confederates of that republic feel the full weight of their vengeance. For this purpose, they ravaged the coast of Apollonia; plundered the city of Ambracia; almost desolated the peninsula, now the island of Leucas; and emboldened by success, ventured to land in the Peloponnesus, and set fire to the harbour of Cyllené, because, in the late sea-fight, the Elians, to whom that place belonged, had supplied Corinth with a few galleys,*

which provoked the Peloponnesians.

The southern states of Greece, highly provoked by this outrage to the peaceable Elians, whose religious character had long commanded general respect, were still farther incensed through the active resentment of the Corinthians, who, exasperated at the disgrace of being vanquished by one of their own colonies, had, ever since their defeat, bent their whole attention, and employed the greatest part even of their private fortunes, to hire mercenaries, to gain allies, and especially to equip a new fleet, that they might be enabled to chastise the impious audacity (as they called it) of their rebellious children.†

The Corcyreans and Corinthians send ambassadors to Athens.

The magistrates of Corcyra saw and dreaded the tempest that threatened to burst on them, and which the unassisted strength of their island was totally unable to repel. They had not taken part in the late wars; they had not acceded to the last treaty of peace; they could not summon the aid of a single confederate. In this difficulty they sent ambassadors to Athens, well knowing the secret animosity between that republic and

* Thucydid. l. i. p. 22, & seqq.

† Idem, *ibid.*

the enemies by whom their own safety was endangered. The Corinthians likewise sent ambassadors to defeat their purpose. Both were allowed a hearing in the Athenian assembly; but first the Corcyreans, who, in a studied oration, acknowledged, "that having no previous claim of merit to urge, they expected not success in their negotiation, unless an alliance between Athens and Corcyra should appear alike advantageous to those who proposed and to those who accepted it. Of this the Athenians would immediately become sensible, if they reflected that the people of Peloponnesus being equally hostile to both (the open enemies of Corcyra, the secret and more dangerous enemies of Athens,) their country must derive a vast accession of strength by receiving, without trouble or expense, a rich and warlike island, which, unassisted and alone, had defeated a numerous confederacy; and whose naval force, augmenting the fleet of Athens, would for ever render that republic sovereign of the seas. If the Corinthians complained of the injustice of receiving their colony, let them remember, that colonies are preserved by moderation, and alienated by oppression; that men settle in foreign parts to better their situation, not to submit their liberties; to continue the equals, not to become the slaves of their less adventurous fellow-citizens. If they pretended, that the demand of Corcyra was inconsistent with the last general treaty of peace, let the words of that treaty confound them, which expressly declare every Grecian city, not previously bound to follow the standard of Athens or of Sparta, at full liberty to accede to the alliance of either of those powers.* But it became the dignity of Athens to expect honour and safety, not from the punctilious observance of a slippery convention, but from the manly and prompt vigour of her councils. It suited the renowned wisdom of a republic, which had ever anticipated her enemies, to prevent the fleet of Corcyra

* Εἰρηται γὰρ ἐν αὐταῖς, τῶν Ἑλληνίδων πόλεων ἥτις μηδαμὸν ἐνυμμάχει, εἶναι τὰς ὁποῖοις ἀν ἀρεσκῆται εἰδέναι. The ὁποῖοις justifies the paraphrase in the text.

from falling a prey to that confederacy, with whose inveterate envy she herself must be soon called to contend, and to merit the useful gratitude of an island possessing other valuable advantages, and most conveniently situate for intercepting the Sicilian and Italian supplies, which, in the approaching and inevitable war, would otherwise so powerfully assist their Doric ancestors of Peloponnesus."

Speech of
the Corin-
thians.

The Corinthians indirectly answered this discourse by inveighing with great bitterness, against the unexampled insolence and unnatural cruelty of Corcyra: "That infamous island had hitherto declined connexion with every Grecian state, that she might carry on her piratical depredations unobserved, and alone enjoy the spoil of the unwary mariners who approached her inhospitable shores. Rendered at once wealthy and wicked through this inhuman practice, the Corcyreans had divested themselves of all piety and gratitude towards their mother country, and embued their parricidal hands in their parent's blood. Their audacity having provoked a late vengeance, which they were unable to elude or repel, they unreasonably sought protection from Athens, desiring those who were not accomplices of their injustice to participate their danger, and deluding them through the vain terror of contingences into certain and immediate evil; for such must every war be regarded, its event being always doubtful, often fatal. The Corcyreans vainly chicaned as to *words*; Athens, it was clear, must violate the *sense* and *spirit* of the last treaty of peace, if she assisted the enemies of any contracting power. These fierce islanders acknowledged themselves a colony of Corinth, but pretended that settlements abroad owe nothing to those who established them, to those whose fostering care reared their infancy, from whose blood they sprung, by whose arms they had been defended. We affirm, on the contrary (and appeal to you, Athenians! who have planted so many colonies,) that the mother country is entitled to that authority which the Corcyreans have long spurned, to that respect which their insolence now refuses and diadains; that it belongs to us, their metropolis to be their

leaders in war, their magistrates in peace; nor can you, Athenians! oppose our just pretensions, and protect our rebellious colony, without setting an example most dangerous to yourselves."

These sensible observations made a deep impression on the moderate portion of the assembly: but the speech of the Corcyreans was more congenial to the ambitious views of the republic, and the daring spirit of Pericles. He wished, however, to avoid the dishonour of manifestly violating the peace, and therefore advised his countrymen to conclude with Corcyra, not a general or complete alliance, but only a treaty of defence, which, in case of invasion, obliged the two states reciprocally to assist each other.

This agreement was no sooner ratified than ten Athenian ships reinforced the fleet of Corcyra, stationed on the *eastern* coast of the island; because the Corinthians, with their numerous allies, already rendezvoused on the opposite shore of Epirus. The hostile armaments met in line of battle, near the small islands Sibota, which seem anciently to have been separated from the continent by the impetuosity of the deep and narrow sea between Epirus and Corcyra. The bold islanders, with an hundred and ten sail, furiously attacked the superior fleet of the Corinthians, which was divided into three squadrons; the Megareans and Ambracians on the right, the Elians and other allies in the centre, their own ships on the left, which composed the principal strength of their line. The narrowness of the strait, and the immense numbers of ships (far greater than had ever assembled in former battles between the Greeks,) soon rendered it impossible on either side, to display any superiority in sailing, or any address in manœuvre. The action was irregular and tumultuous, and maintained with more firmness and vigour than naval skill. The numerous troops, both heavy and light armed, who were placed on the decks, advanced, engaged, grappled, and fought with obstinate valour; while the ships,

The Athenians enter into a treaty of defence with the Corcyreans.

Second sea-fight between the Corinthians and Corcyreans. Olymp. lxxvii. 1. A. C. 432.

continuing motionless and inactive, made the sea-fight resemble a pitched battle. At length, twenty Corcyrean galleys, having broke the left wing of the enemy, and pursued them to the coast of Epirus, injudiciously landed there to burn or plunder the Corinthian camp.

The Corcyreans defeated.

This unessential service too much weakened the smaller fleet, and rendered the inequality decisive. The Corcyreans were defeated with great slaughter, their incensed adversaries disregarding plunder and prisoners, and only thirsting for blood and revenge. In the blindness of their rage, they destroyed many of their fellow-citizens, who had been captured by the enemy in the beginning of the engagement. Nor was their loss of ships inconsiderable; thirty were sunk, and the rest so much shattered, that when they endeavoured to pursue the feeble remains of the Corcyrean fleet which had lost seventy galleys, they were effectually prevented from executing this design by the small Athenian squadron, which, according to its instructions from the republic, had taken no share in the battle, but, agreeably to the recent treaty between Athens and Corcyra, opposed the total destruction of their allies, first by hostile threats, at length by actual resistance.

Arrival of an Athenian squadron.

The Corinthians having dragged up their wreck, and recovered the bodies of their slain, refitted on the coast of Epirus, and hastened to Corcyra; considerably off which they beheld the enemy reinforced, and drawn up in line of battle, in order to defend their coast. They advanced, however, with intrepidity, till to their surprise and terror, they perceived an unknown fleet pressing towards them. This new appearance shook their resolution, and made them change their course. The Corcyreans, whose situation at first prevented them from seeing the advancing squadron, were astonished at the sudden retreat of the enemy; but when they discovered its cause, their uncertainty and fears, increased by their late afflicting calamity, made them prefer the safest measure. They also turned their prows; and, while the Corinthians retired to Epirus, pressed

in an opposite direction to Corcyra. There, to their inexpressible joy, not unmixed with shame, they were joined by the unknown fleet, consisting of twenty Athenian galleys; a reinforcement which enabled them, next morning, to brave the late victorious armament off the coast of Sibota, a deserted harbour of Epirus, opposite to the small islands of the same name.

The Corinthians, unwilling to contend with the unbroken vigour of their new opponents, despatched a brigantine with the following remonstrance: "You act most unjustly, men of Athens! in breaking the peace, and commencing unprovoked hostilities. On what pretence do you hinder the Corinthians from taking vengeance on an insolent foe? If you are determined to persist in wrong, seize us who address you, and treat us as enemies." The words were scarcely ended when the Corcyreans exclaimed, with a loud and unanimous voice, "Seize and kill them!" But the Athenians answered with moderation: "Men of Corinth, we neither break the peace, nor act unjustly. We come to defend our allies of Corcyra: sail unmolested by us to whatever friendly port you deem most convenient; but if you purpose making a descent on Corcyra, or on any of the dependencies of that island, we will exert our utmost power to frustrate your attempt.*

The Corinthians remonstrate against the proceedings of the Athenians.

Their answer.

This menace, which prevented immediate hostility, did not deter the Corinthians from surprising, as they sailed homeward, the town of Anactorium, on the Ambracian gulf, which, in the time of harmony between the colony and parent state, had been built at the joint expense of Corinth and Corcyra. From this sea-port, they carried off two hundred and fifty Corcyrean citizens, and eight hundred slaves. The former, added to the captives saved during the fury of the sea-fight, by the clemency or the avarice of a few Corinthian

The Corinthians surprise Anactorium, and take many Corcyreans prisoners.

* Thucyd. p. 37.

captains, made the whole prisoners of war amount to twelve hundred and fifty; a capture which, as we shall have occasion to relate, produced most important and lamentable consequences on the future fortune of Corcyra.

Their
scheme for
defeating
the ven-
geance of
Athens.
Olymp.
lxxvii. 1.
A. C. 432.

The Corinthians, having chastised the insolence of their revolted colony, had reason to dread the vengeance of its powerful ally. Impressed with this terror, they laboured with great activity and with unusual secrecy and address, to find for the Athenian arms an employment still more interesting than the Corcyrean war. The domestic strength

of Athens defied assault; but a people who, on the basis of a diminutive territory and scanty population, had reared such an extensive fabric of empire, might easily be wounded in their foreign dependencies, which, for obvious causes, were ever

Description
of the Mace-
donian
coast.

prone to innovation and rebellion. The northern shores of the *Ægæan* sea, afterwards comprehended under the name of Macedon, and forming the most valuable portion of that kingdom, reluctantly acknowledged stern republican masters whom they obeyed and detested. This extensive coast, of which the subsequent history will demand our attention, composed, next to the *Ægæan* islands and colonies of Asia, the principal foreign dominions of the Athenian republic. The whole country (naturally divided by the Thermaic and Strymonic gulfs into the provinces of *Piëria*, *Chalcis*, and *Pangæus*) stretched in a direct line only an hundred and fifty miles; but the winding intricacies of the coast, indented by two great, and by two smaller bays, extended three times that length; and almost every convenient situation was occupied by a Grecian sea-port. But neither the extent of above four hundred miles, nor the extreme populousness of the maritime parts, formed the chief importance of this valuable possession. The middle division, called the region of *Chalcis*, because originally peopled by a city of that name in *Eubœa*, was equally fertile and delightful. The inland country, continually diversified by lakes, rivers, and arms of the sea, afforded an extreme facility of water carriage;

Amphipolis, Acanthus, Potidæa, and many other towns, furnished considerable marts of commerce for the republics of Greece, as well as for the neighbouring kingdoms of Thrace and Macedon; and the constant demands of the merchant excited the patient industry of the husbandman. This beautiful district had, on one side, the black mountains of Pangæus, and on the other, the green vales of Pieria. The former, extending ninety miles towards the east and the river Nessus, abounded neither in corn nor pasture, but produced variety of timber the fittest for building ships; and the southern branches of the mountains contained rich veins of gold and silver, which were successively wrought by the Thasians and the Athenians, but of which the full value was first discovered by Philip of Macedon, who annually extracted from them the value of two hundred thousand pounds sterling.* The last and smallest division, Pieria, extended fifty miles along the Thermaic gulf, to the confines of Thessaly and Mount Pindus. The towns of Pydna and Methoné enriched the shore with the benefits of arts and commerce. Nature had been peculiarly kind to the inland country, whose shady hills, sequestered groves and fountains, lovely verdure, and tranquil solitude, rendered it, in the fanciful belief of antiquity, the favourite haunt of the Muses; who borrowed from this district their favourite appellation of *Pierides*. According to the same poetical creed, these goddesses might well *envy* the mortal inhabitants, who led a pastoral life, enjoyed happiness, and are scarcely mentioned in history.

Such was the nature, and such the divisions of a territory, which the policy and resentment of Corinth encouraged to successful rebellion against the sovereignty of Athens. Several maritime communities of the Chalcidic† took refuge within the walls

That country revolts from Athens.

* Diodorous, l. xvi. p. 514.

† In using the name of Chalcidic I have followed the analogy of the Greek language rather than complied with custom: yet that part of the Macedonian coast, usually called the region of Chalcia, gave name to the province of Chal-

of Olynthus, a town which they had built and fortified, at the distance of five miles from the sea, in a fertile and secure situation, between the rivers Olynthus and Amnius, which flow into the lake Bolyca, the inmost recess of the Toronaic gulf. The neighbouring city of Potidæa, a colony of Corinth, and governed by annual magistrates sent from the mother country, yet like most establishments in the Chalcidicé, a tributary confederate* of Athens, likewise strengthened its walls, and prepared to revolt. But the Athenians anticipated this design, by sending a fleet of thirty sail, which having entered the harbour of Potidæa, commanded the citizens to demolish their fortifications, to give hostages as security for their good behaviour, and to dismiss the Corinthian magistrates. The Potidæans artfully requested, that the execution of these severe commands might be suspended until they had time to send ambassadors to Athens, and to remove the unjust suspicions of their fidelity.

The Athenians besiege Potidæa.
Olymp. lxxxvii. 2.
A. C. 432.

The weakness or avarice of Ancestratus the Athenian admiral, listened to this deceitful request, and, leaving the coast of Potidæa, directed the operations of his squadrons against places of less importance not sparing the dependencies of Macedonia. Meanwhile the Potidæans sent a public but illusive embassy to Athens, while one more effectual was secretly despatched to Corinth, and other cities of the Peloponnesus, from which they were supplied with two thousand men, commanded by the Corinthian Aristeus, a brave and enterprising general. These troops were thrown into the place during the absence of the Athenian fleet; and the Potidæans, thus reinforced, set their enemies at defiance. Incensed at this intelligence, the Athenians fitted out a new fleet of

cidicé in Syria, as Strabo mentions in his sixteenth book; wherein he explains how the principle division of Syria came to be distinguished, after the conquests of Alexander, by Grecian appellations, borrowed from the geography described in the text.

* Συμμαχος ὑποταλῆς. Thucydid.

forty sail, with a large body of troops, under the command of Callias; who arriving on the coast of Macedonia, found the squadron of Ancestratus employed in the siege of Pydna. Callias judiciously exhorted him to desist from that enterprise, comparatively of little importance, that the united squadrons might attack Potidæa by sea, while an Athenian army of three thousand citizens, with a due proportion of allies, assaulted it by land. This measure was adopted, but the spirit of the garrison soon offered them battle almost on equal terms, though with unequal success. Callias, however, was slain, and succeeded by Phormio; who conducting a fresh supply of troops, desolated the hostile territory of Chalcis and Pieria; took several towns by storm; and, having ravaged the adjoining district, besieged the city of Potidæa.

While those transactions were carrying on in the north, the centre of Greece was shaken by the murmurs and complaints of the Corinthians and their Peloponnesian confederates, who lost all patience when their citizens were blocked up by an Athenian army. Accompanied by the deputies of several republics beyond the isthmus, who had recently experienced the arrogance of their imperious neighbour, they had recourse to Sparta, whose actual power and ancient renown justly merited the first rank in the confederacy, but whose measures* were rendered slow and cautious by the foresight and peaceful counsels of the wary Archidamus. When introduced into the Spartan assembly, the representatives of all the states inveighed, with equal bitterness, against the injustice and cruelty of Athens, while each described and exaggerated the weight of its peculiar grievances. The Megareans complained that, by a recent decree of that stern unfeeling repub-

The Corinthians endeavour to exasperate the Lacedæmonians against Athens.

* Plutarch (in Pericl.) ascribes the backwardness of the Spartans to engage in war to the advice of their principal magistrates, bribed by Pericles, who wished to gain time for his military preparations; a report as improbable as another calumny, that they were bribed by their allies to take arms against Athens (Aristoph in Pace.) The cause of their irresolution, assigned in the text, is confirmed by the subsequent behaviour of Archidamus.

lic, they had been excluded from the ports and markets of Attica;* an exclusion which considering the narrowness and poverty of their own rocky district, was to deprive them of the first necessities of life. The inhabitants of Ægina explained and lamented that, in defiance of recent and solemn treaties, and disregarding the liberal spirit of Grecian policy, the Athenians had reduced their unfortunate island into the most deplorable condition of servitude.

Speech of
the Corin-
thians ;

When other states had described their particular sufferings, the Corinthians last arose, and their speaker thus addressed the Lacedæmonian assembly : “ Had we come hither, men of Lacedæmon ! to urge our private wrongs, it might be sufficient barely to relate the transactions of the preceding, and present, years. The revolt of Corcyra, the siege of Potidæa, are facts which speak for themselves ; but the attention of this assembly should be directed to objects more important than particular injuries, however flagrant and enormous. The *general* oppressive system of Athenian policy ;—it is this which demands your most serious concern ; a system aiming at nothing less than the destruction of Grecian freedom, which is ready to perish through your supine neglect. That moderation and probity, men of Sparta ! for which your domestic councils are justly famous, render you the dupes of foreign artifice, and expose you to become the

* The Megareans were accused of ploughing some consecrated lands : they were accused of harbouring the Athenian slaves, fugitives, and exiles ; other causes of complaint might easily have been discovered or invented by their powerful neighbours, who were provoked that such a small community on their frontier should uniformly spurn their authority. But the malignity of comic writers ascribed the severe decree against Megara to an event equally disgraceful to the morals of Athens, and injurious to the honour of Pericles. The following verses are translated from the *Acharnensis* of Aristophanes.

Juvenes profecti Megaram ebrij auferunt
Simatham ex scortatione nobilem :
Megarensis hinc populus, dolore perictus,
Furatur Aspasix duo scorta, haud impiger :
Hinc initium belli prorupit
Universis Græcis, ob tres meritriculas.

victims of foreign ambition ; which, instead of opposing with prompt alacrity you have nourished by unseasonable delay ; and, in consequence of this fatal error, are now called to contend, not with the infant weakness, but with the matured vigour of your enemies, those enemies who, ever unsatisfied with their present measure of prosperity, are continually intent on some new project of aggrandizement. How different from *your* slow procrastination is the ardent character of the Athenians ! Fond of novelty, and fertile in resources, alike active and vigilant, the accomplishment of one design leads them to another more daring. Desire, hope, enterprise, success, follow in rapid succession. Already have they subdued half of Greece ; their ambition grasps the whole. Rouse, then, from your lethargy, defend your allies, invade Attica, maintain the glory of Peloponnesus, that sacred deposit with which being intrusted by your ancestors, you are bound to transmit unimpaired to posterity."

Several Athenians, then residing on private business at Sparta, desired to be heard in defence of their country. Equity could not deny the request of these voluntary advocates, who spoke in a style well becoming the loftiness of their republic.* With the pride of superiority, rather than the indignation of accused innocence, they affected to despise the false aspersions of their adversaries ; and, instead of answering directly the many and loud clamours against their presumptuous abuse of power, described with swelling encomiums " the illustrious and memorable exploits of their countrymen ; exploits which had justly raised them to a pre-eminence, acknowledged by their allies, uncontested by Sparta, and felt by Persia. When the dignity of Greece required of her to chastise the repeated insults of that ambitious empire, the Spartans had declined the conduct of a distant war ; Athens had assumed the abandoned helm, and after demolishing the cruel dominion of Barbarians, had acquired a just and lawful sway over the coasts of Europe and of Asia.

answered
by the
Athenians.

* Thucyd. l. xliii. & seqq.

The new subjects of the republic were long treated rather as fellow-citizens, than as tributaries and vassals. But it was the nature of man to revolt against the *supposed* injustice of his equals, rather than against the *real* tyranny of his masters. This circumstance, so honourable to Athenian lenity, had occasioned several unprovoked rebellions, which the republic had been compelled to punish with an exemplary severity. The apprehension of future commotions had lately obliged her to hold, with a firmer hand, the reins of government, and to maintain with armed power, an authority justly earned, and strictly founded in nature, of which it is an unalterable law, that the strong should govern the weak. If the Spartans, in violation of the right of treaties, thought proper to oppose this immoveable purpose, Athens well knew how to redress her wrongs, and would, doubtless, uphold her empire with the same valour and activity by which it had been established."

Pacific advice of king Archidamus;

Having heard both parties, the assembly journeyed, without forming any resolution. But next day, it appeared to be the prevailing opinion, that the arrogance and usurpation of Athens had already violated the peace, and that it became the prudence as well as the dignity of Sparta, no longer to defer hostilities. This popular current was vainly opposed by the experienced wisdom of king Archidamus, who still counselled peace and moderation, though his courage had been conspicuously distinguished in every season of danger. He exhorted his countrymen "not to rush blindly on war, without examining the resources of the enemy and their own. The Athenians were powerful in ships, in money, in cavalry, and in arms; all of which the Lacedæmonians were destitute, or, at least, but sparingly provided. Whatever provocation, therefore, they had received, they ought in prudence to dissemble their resentment, until they could effectually exert their vengeance. The present crisis required negotiation; if that failed, the silent preparation of a few years would enable them to take the field with well-founded hopes of redressing the grievances of their confederates."

Had this moderate language made any impression on such an assembly, it would have been speedily obliterated by the blunt boldness of Sthenelaides, one of the Ephori, who closed the debate. "Men of Sparta! Of the long speeches of the Athenians I understand not the drift. While they dwell with studied eloquence on their own praises, they deny not to have injured our allies. If they behaved *well* in the Persian war, and now *otherwise*, their demerit is only the more apparent. Both then, and now, we are still the same; and, if we would maintain our character, we must not overlook their injustice. *They* have ships, money, and horses; but *we* have good allies, whose interests we must not abandon. Why do we deliberate, while our enemies are in arms? Let us take the field, with speed, and fight with all our might." The acclamations of the people followed, and war was resolved.

opposed by Sthenelaides, one of the Ephori.

This resolution was taken in the fourteenth year after the conclusion of the general peace; but near a twelvemonth elapsed before the properest measures for invading Attica could be finally adjusted among the discordant members of so numerous a confederacy. It consisted of all the seven republics of the Peloponnesus, except Argos and Achaia, the first of which from ambition, and the second perhaps from moderation,* preserved, in the beginning of the war, a suspicious neutrality. Of the nine northern republics, Acarnania alone declined joining the allies, its coast being particularly exposed to the ravages of the Corcyrean fleets. The cities of Naupactus and Plataea, for reasons that will soon appear, were totally devoted to their Athenian protectors; whose cause was likewise embraced by several petty princes of Thessaly. But all the other states beyond the isthmus longed

War determined. Olymp. lxxxvii. 2. A. C. 432.

General confederacy against Athens;

* The ambition of Argos is confirmed by the subsequent measures of that republic; the moderation of Achaia is suspected, from the nature of the Achæan laws, which have been already mentioned, and are particularly explained in my History of the World, vol. 2. c. 13.

to follow the standard of Sparta, and to humble the aspiring ambition of their too powerful neighbour.

sends a menacing embassy to that republic ;

The representatives of these various communities having according to the received practice of Greece, assembled in the principal city of the confederacy, were stimulated to action by the Corinthians, who, as their colony of Potidæa was still closely besieged, laboured to accelerate reprisals on Attica, by exhibiting the most advantageous prospect of the approaching war. They observed, "That the army of the confederacy, exceeding sixty thousand men, far out-numbered the enemy, whom they excelled still more in merit, than they surpassed in number. The one was composed of national troops, fighting for the independence of those countries in whose government they had a share; the other chiefly consisted in vile mercenaries, whose pay was their government and their country. If supplies of money were requisite, the allied states would doubtless be more liberal and forward to defend their interest and honour, than the reluctant tributaries of Athens to rivet their servitude and chains; and, if still more money should be wanted, the Delphic and Olympic treasures afforded an inexhaustible resource, which could not be better expended than in defending the sacred cause of justice and of Grecian freedom." In order to gain full time, however, for settling all matters among themselves, the confederates despatched to Athens various overtures of accommodation, which they well knew would be indignantly rejected. In each embassy they rose in their demands, successively requiring the Athenians to raise the siege of Potidæa; to repeal their prohibitory decree against Megara; to withdraw their garrison from Ægina; in fine, to declare the independence of their colonies.*

* Besides complying with the demands mentioned in the text, the Athenians were required "to expel the descendants of those impious men who had profaned the temple of Minerva." This alluded to an event which happened the first year of the 45th Olympiad, or 598 years before Christ. Cylon, a powerful Athenian, having seized the citadel, and aspiring at royalty, was defeated in his purpose by Megacles, a maternal ancestor of Pericles, who,

These last demands were heard at Athens with a mixture of rage and terror. The capricious multitude, who had hitherto approved and admired the aspiring views of Pericles, now trembled on the brink of the precipice to which he had conducted them. They had hitherto pushed the siege of Potidæa with great vigour, but without any near prospect of success. They must now contend with a numerous confederacy, expose their boasted grandeur to the doubtful chance of war, and exchange the amusements and pleasures of the city for the toils and hardships of a camp. Of these discontented murmurs, the rivals and enemies of Pericles greedily availed themselves to traduce the character and administration of that illustrious statesman.

which
alarms the
Athenians.

It was insinuated, that, sacrificing to private passion the interest of his country, he had procured the imperious decree, of which the allies so justly complained, to resent the personal injury of his beloved Aspasia, whose family had been insulted by some licentious youths of Megara.* Diopœithes, Dracontides, and other demagogues, derided the folly of taking arms on such a frivolous pretence; and, as preparatory to the impeachment of Pericles himself, the courts of justice were fatigued with prosecutions of his valuable friends.

Clamour
excited
against
Pericles.

The philosopher Anaxagoras, and Phidias the statuary, reflected more lustre than they could derive from the protection of any patron. The character of Aspasia was of a mixed and doubtful kind. To the natural and sprightly graces of Ionia, her native country, she added extraordinary accomplishments of mind and body; and having acquired in high perfection the talents and excel-

Persecution
of his
friends.

having decoyed the associates of Cylon from the temple of Minerva, butchered them without mercy, and with too little respect for the privileges of that venerable sanctuary. The whole transaction is particularly related by Plutarch in his life of Solon. The renewal of such an antiquated complaint, at this juncture, pointed particularly at Pericles, and showed the opinion which the Spartans entertained of his unrivalled influence and authority.

* See above, p. 162.

lences of the other sex, was accused of being too indifferent to the honour of her own. Scarcely superior in modesty to Phryné, Thais, or Erigoné,* her wit, her learning, and her eloquence, excited universal admiration or envy,† while the beauty of her fancy and of her person inspired more tender sentiments into the susceptible breast of Pericles. She was reproached, not with entertaining free votaries of pleasure in her family (which in that age was regarded as a very allowable commerce,) but of seducing the virtue of Athenian matrons; a crime severely punished by the laws of every Grecian republic. But we have reason to infer innocence in this particular, since she was saved by Pericles from the fury of an enraged populace, at a crisis when his most strenuous exertions could not prevent the banishment of Anaxagoras and Phidias.

Banishment
of Anaxago-
ras and Phi-
dias.

The former was accused of propagating doctrines inconsistent with the established religion; the latter, of having indulged the very pardonable vanity (as it should seem) of representing himself and his patron on the shield of his admired statue of Minerva. There, with inimitable art, Phidias had engraved the renowned victory of the Athenians over the warlike daughters of the Thermodon;‡ he had depicted himself under the figure of a bald old man raising a heavy stone (an allusion to his skill in architecture,) while the features of Pericles were distinguished in the countenance of an Athenian chief, bravely combatting the Queen of the Amazons, though his elevated arm hid part of the face, and in some measure concealed the resemblance.§ For this fictitious crime, Phidias was driven from a city which had been adorned by the unwearied labours of his long life, and debarred beholding those wonders of art which his sublime genius had created.

Accusation
of Pericles.

The accusation of the principal friends of Pericles paved the way for his own. He was re-

* See above, p. 96.

† Lysias Orat. Funeb.

‡ Plato in Menex.

§ Plut. in Pericl. & Aristot. de Mund.

proached with embezzling the public treasure; but, on this occasion, plain facts confounded the artifices of his enemies. It was proved, that his private expenses were justly proportioned to the measure of his patrimony; many instances were brought of his generous contempt of wealth in the service of his country; and it appeared, after the strictest examination, that his fortune had not increased since he was intrusted with the exchequer. This honourable display of unshaken probity, which had ever formed the basis of the authority* of Pericles, again reconciled to him the unsteady affections of his countrymen, and gave resistless force to that famous and fatal speech, which unalterably determined the war of Peloponnesus.

“Often have I declared, Athenians! that we must not obey the unjust commands of our enemies. I am still firmly of that mind, convinced as I am of the dangerous vicissitudes of war and fortune; and that human hopes, designs, and pursuits, are all fleeting and fallacious. Yet, in the present crisis, necessity and glory should alike fix us to this immoveable resolution. The decree against Megara, which the first embassy required us to repeal, is not the cause of that hostile jealousy which has long secretly envied our greatness, and which has now more openly conspired our destruction. Yet that decree, of which some men have spoken so lightly, involved the honour of our councils and the stability of our empire. By pusillanimously repealing it, we should have

He justifies his measures and maintains the necessity of the war;

* This testimony, which is given by the impartiality of Thucydides, destroys at once the numerous aspersions of the comic poets of the times which have been copied by Plutarch, and from him transcribed by modern compilers. Pericles, it is said, raised the war of Peloponnesus, merely for his own convenience and safety; and was encouraged to this measure by the advice of his kinsman Alcibiades, then a boy; who, calling one day at his house, was refused admittance, “because Pericles was occupied in considering how he might best state his accounts.” “Let him rather consider,” said the sagacious stripling, “how to give no account at all.” Pericles took the hint, and involved his country in a war, which allowed no time for examining the public expenditure. Such anecdotes may amuse those who can believe them.

emboldened our enemies, who, notwithstanding our proper firmness in the first instance, have yet successively risen to higher and more arbitrary demands; demands which merit to be answered, not by embassies, but by arms.

explains the strength and resources of the republic; "The flourishing resources, and actual strength, of the republic, affords us the most flattering prospect of military success. Impregably fortified by land, our shores are defended by three hundred galleys; besides a body of cavalry, to the number of twelve hundred, together with two thousand archers, we can immediately take the field with thirteen thousand pikemen, without draining our foreign garrisons, or diminishing the complete number of sixteen thousand men who defend the walls and fortresses in Attica. The wealthy seaports of Thrace and Macedon; the flourishing colonies of Ionia, Eolia, and Doria; in a word, the whole extensive coast of the Asiatic peninsula, acknowledge, by annual contributions, the sovereignty of our guardian navy, whose strength is increased by the ships of Chios, Lesbos, and Corcyra, while the smaller islands, furnish us, according to their ability, with money and troops. Athens thus reigns queen of a thousand* tributary republics, and notwithstanding the expenses incurred by the siege of Potidæa, and the architectural ornaments of the city, she possesses six thousand talents in her treasury.

which he contrasts with the weakness of the enemy: "The situation of our enemies is totally the reverse. Animated by rage, and emboldened by numbers, they may be roused to a transient, desultory assault; but destitute of resources, and divided in interests, they are totally incapable of any steady, persevering exertion. With sixty thousand men they may enter Attica; and if our unseasonable courage gives them an opportunity, may win a battle; but unless our rash imprudence assists and enables them, they cannot possibly prosecute a successful war. Indeed, Athenians! I dread less

* Aristoph. Vesp. He says, that twenty thousand Athenians might live as in the Elysian fields, if each tributary city undertook to provide for twenty citizens. V. 705, &c.

the power of the enemy, than your own ungovernable spirit. Instead of being seduced from your security, by a vain desire to defend, against superior numbers, your plantations and villas in the open country, you ought to destroy those superfluous possessions with your own hands. To you, who receive the conveniences of life from so many distant dependencies, the devastation of Attica is a matter of small moment; but how can your enemies repair, how can they survive the devastation of the Peloponnesus? How can they prevent, or remedy, this fatal, this intolerable calamity, while the squadrons of Athens command the surrounding seas? If these considerations be allowed their full weight; if reason, not passion, conducts the war; it seems scarcely in the power of fortune to rob you of victory. Yet let us answer the Peloponnesians with moderation, "that we will not forbid the Megareans our ports and markets, if the Spartans, and other states of Greece, abolish

dictates a
reply to the
Peloponnesians,

their exclusive and inhospitable laws: that we will restore independent governments to such cities as were free at the last treaty of peace, provided the Spartans engage to imitate this example; that we are ready to submit all differences, to the impartial decision of any equitable tribunal; and that, although these condescending overtures be rejected, we will not commence hostilities, but are prepared to repel them with our usual vigour."* The assembly murmured applause; a decree was proposed and ratified; the ambassadors returned home with the reply dictated by Pericles; which, moderate as it seemed to the Athenian statesman, sounded like an immediate declaration of war to the Spartans and their allies.

which is taken for declaration of war.

Six months after the battle of Potidæa, the Thebans, who were the most powerful and the most

The Thebans sur-

* In examining the speech ascribed to Pericles, on this occasion, by Thucydides, the attentive reader will perceive that it supposes the knowledge of several events omitted in the preceding narrative of that historian, but which I have related in the text. The English speech is shorter than the Greek, but contains more information, collected from Plutarch, Diodorus, Aristophanes, and the second book of Thucydides himself.

prise Plataea.
Olymp.
lxxxvii. 2.
A. C. 431.
May the
7th.

daring of these allies, undertook a military enterprise against the small but magnanimous republic of Plataea. Though situate in the heart of Bœotia, amidst numerous and warlike enemies, the Plataeans still preserved an unshaken fidelity to Athens, whose toils and triumphs they had shared in the Persian war. Yet even this feeble community, surrounded on every side by hostile Bœotians, was not exempted from domestic discord. Naucrides, the perfidious and bloody leader of an aristocratical faction, engaged to betray the Plataean gates to a body of foreign troops, provided they enabled him to overturn the democracy, and to take vengeance on his political adversaries, whom he regarded as his personal foes. Eurymachus, a noble and wealthy Theban, with whom, in the name of his associates, this sanguinary agreement had been contracted, entered Plataea with three hundred of his countrymen, at the first watch of the night; but, regardless of their promise to Naucrides, who expected that they would break tumultuously into the houses, and butcher his enemies, the Thebans formed regularly in arms, and remained quietly in the market-place, having issued a proclamation to invite all the citizens indiscriminately to become allies to Thebes. The Plataeans readily accepted a proposal which delivered them from the terror of immediate death. But while they successively ratified the agreement, they observed, with mixed shame and joy, that darkness and surprise had greatly augmented the number of the invaders. Encouraged by this discovery, they secretly despatched a messenger to Athens; and, while they expected the assistance of their distant protector, determined to leave nothing untried for their own deliverance.

Daring enterprise of the Plataeans.

The night was spent in an operation not less daring than extraordinary. As they could not assemble in the streets without alarming suspicion they dug through the interior walls of their houses, and fortified the outward in the best manner the time would allow, with their ploughs, carts, and other instruments of husbandry. Before daybreak, the work was complete; when, with one

consent, they rushed furiously against the enemy, the women and children animating with horrid shrieks and gestures, the efforts of their rage. It was night, and a storm of rain and thunder augmented the gloomy terrors of the battle. The Thebans were unacquainted with the ground; above an hundred fell; near two hundred fled in trepidation to a lofty and spacious tower adjoining the walls, which they mistook for one of the gates of the city. In the first movements of resentment, the Platæans prepared to burn them alive; but a moment's reflection deterred them from this dangerous cruelty. Meanwhile a considerable body of Thebans advanced towards Platæa, to co-operate with their countrymen. Their progress would have been hastened by a fugitive who met them, and related the miscarriage of the enterprise, had not the heavy rain so much swelled the Asopus, that an unusual time was spent in crossing that river. They had scarcely entered the Platæan territory, when a second messenger informed them, that their unfortunate companions were all killed or taken prisoners. Upon this intelligence they paused to consider, whether, instead of proceeding to the Platæan walls, where they could not perform any immediate service, they ought not, as an easier enterprise, to seize the citizens of that place, who were dispersed over their villages in the open country.

But while they deliberated on this measure, a Platæan herald arrived, complaining of the unjust and most unexpected infraction of the peace, by a daring and atrocious conspiracy; commanding the Thebans immediately to leave the territory of Platæa, if they hoped to deliver their fellow-citizens from captivity; and denouncing, if they refused compliance, that their countrymen would inevitably be punished with a cruel death. This stratagem, no less audacious than artful, prevailed on the enemy to repass the Asopus, while the Platæans lost not a moment to assemble within their walls the scattered inhabitants of their fields and villas; and braving the Theban resentment, the immediate effects of which they had rendered impotent, massacred the unhappy prisoners,

Their stratagem for destroying the Thebans without danger to themselves.

to the number of an hundred and eighty, among whom was Eurymachus, the chief promoter of the expedition. After this signal act of vengeance, they strengthened the works of the place; transported their wives and children to the tributary islands of Athens; and, that they might more securely sustain the expected siege, required and received from that republic a plentiful supply of provisions, and a considerable reinforcement of troops.

Prepara-
tions for
war on both
sides.

A. C. 431.

The sword was now drawn, and both parties seemed eager to exert their utmost strength. The Spartans summoned their confederates to the Isthmus; demanded money and ships from their Italian and Sicilian colonies; and solicited assistance from the Persian monarch Artaxerxes, and from Perdiccas king of Macedon; both of whom naturally regarded the Athenians as dangerous neighbours, and ambitious invaders of their coasts. The people of Athens also condescended to crave the aid of Barbarians, and actually contracted an alliance with Sitalces, the warlike chief of the Odrysians, who formed the most powerful tribe in Upper Thrace. They required at the same time an immediate supply of cavalry from their Thessalian allies, while their fleet already cruised on the coast of Peloponnesus, to confirm the fidelity of the surrounding islands; an object deemed essential to the successful invasion of that territory. The unexperienced youth, extremely numerous in most republics of Greece, rejoiced at the prospect of war. The aged saw and dreaded the general commotion, darkly foretold, as they thought, by ancient oracles and prophecies, but clearly and recently announced, by an earthquake in the sacred, and hitherto immoveable island of Delos. Such was the ardour of preparation, that only a few weeks after the surprise of Platæa, the Lacedæmonian confederates, to the number of sixty thousand, assembled from the north and south, at the Corinthian Isthmus. The several communities were respectively commanded by leaders of their own appointment; but the general conduct of the war was intrusted to Archidamus, the Spartan king.

In a council of the chiefs, that prince warmly approved their alacrity in taking the field, and extolled the greatness and bravery of an army, the most numerous and best provided that had ever followed the standard of any Grecian general. Yet their preparations, he said, however extraordinary, were not greater than their enterprise required. They waged war with a people not less powerful than active and daring; who had discernment to perceive, and ability to improve, every opportunity of advantage; and whose resentment would be as much inflamed, as their pride would be wounded, by the approach of invading enemies. It seemed probable, that the Athenians would not allow their lands to be wasted, without attempting to defend them. The confederates, therefore, must be always on their guard; their discipline must be strict, regular, and uniform; to elude the skill, and to oppose the strength of Athens, demanded their utmost vigilance and activity.

Archidamus addresses the confederates.

Archidamus, after leading his army into Attica, seems blameable for allowing their martial ardour to evaporate in the fruitless siege of Oenoë, the strongest Athenian town towards the southern frontier of Bœotia. This tedious and unsuccessful operation enabled the Athenians, to complete, without interruption, the singular plan of defence so ably traced by the bold genius of Pericles. They hastened the desolation of their own fields; demolished their delightful gardens and villas, which it had been their pride to adorn; and transported, either to Athens or the isles, their valuable effects, their cattle, furniture, and even the frames of their houses. The numerous inhabitants of the country towns and villages, where the more opulent Athenians commonly spent the greater part of their time, flocked to the capital which was well furnished with the means of subsistence, though not of accommodation, for such a promiscuous crowd of strangers, with their families, slaves, or servants. Many people of lower rank, destitute of private dwellings, were obliged to occupy the public halls, the groves and temples, the walls and battlements. Even persons of distinction were narrowly and meanly

Leads them to Attica.

lodged ; an inconvenience severely felt by men accustomed to live at large in the country, in rural ease and elegance. But resentment against the public enemy blunted the sense of personal hardship, and silenced every murmur of private complaint.

The confederates
ravage Attica.
Olymp.
lxxxvii. 2.
A. C. 431.

Meanwhile the confederate army, having raised the siege of Oenoë, advanced along the eastern frontier of Attica ; and within eighty days after the surprise of Plataea, invaded the Thracian plain, the richest ornament of the Athenian territory. Having wasted that valuable district with fire and sword, they proceeded to Eleusis, and from thence to Acharnæ, the largest borough in the commonwealth, and only eight miles distant from the capital. There they continued an unusual length of time, gradually demolishing the houses and plantations, and daily exercising every act of rapacious cruelty, with a view either to draw the enemy to a battle, or to discover whether they were unalterably determined to keep within their walls ; a resolution, which, if clearly ascertained, would enable the invaders to proceed with more boldness and effect, and to carry on their ravages with security, even to the gates of Athens.

The Athenians retort
their injuries.

The Athenians, hitherto intent on their naval preparations, had exerted an uncommon degree of patience and self-command. But their unruly passions could no longer be restrained, when they learned the proceedings in Acharnæ. The proprietors of that rich and extensive district boasted that they alone could send three thousand brave spearmen into the field, and lamented, that they should remain cooped up in dishonourable confinement, while their possessions fell a prey to an hostile invader. Their animated complaints inflamed the kindred ardour of the Athenian youth. It appeared unworthy of those who had so often ravaged with impunity the territories of their neighbours, patiently to behold the desolation of their own. Interested priests announced approaching calamity ; seditious orators clamoured against the timid councils of Pericles ; the

impetuous youth required their general to lead them to battle. Amidst this popular commotion, the accomplished general and statesman remained unmoved, bravely resisting the storm, or dexterously eluding its force. Though determined not to risk an engagement with the confederates, he seasonably employed the Athenian and Thessalian cavalry to beat up their quarters, to intercept their convoys, to harass, surprise, or cut off their advanced parties. While these enterprises tended to divert or appease the tumult, a fleet of an hundred and fifty sail ravaged the defenceless coast of Peloponnesus. A squadron, less numerous, made a descent on Locris. The rebellious inhabitants of Ægina were driven from their possessions, and an Athenian colony was settled in that island. The wretched fugitives, whose country had long rivalled Athens itself in wealth, commerce, and naval power, received the maritime district of Thyrea* from the bounty of their Spartan protectors.

Intelligence of these proceedings, and still more the scarcity of provisions, engaged the confederates to return to their respective republics. Having advanced by the eastern, they retired along the western, frontier of Attica; every place in their line of march experiencing the fatal effects of their resentment or rapacity. Soon after their retreat, Pericles, towards the beginning of autumn, led out the Athenians to ravage the neighbouring and hostile territory of Megara. The invading army was accidentally observed by the fleet, while it returned from the coast of Peloponnesus. The sailors hastened to share the danger and plunder. The whole Athenian force thus amounted to nearly twenty thousand men; a number far more than sufficient to deprive the industrious Magareans of the hopes of a scanty harvest, earned with infinite toil and care, in their narrow mountainous district.

The confederates evacuate Attica.

Pericles invades Megara.

* This district lay on the frontier of the Argive and Lacedæmonian territory, and had long formed an object of contention between those republics. See vol. i. pp. 238, 239.

The winter was not distinguished by any important expedition on either side. The Corinthians, long inured to the sea in all seasons, carried on indecisive hostilities against the Athenian allies in Acarnania. During this inactive portion of the year, the Athenians, as well as their enemies, were employed in celebrating the memory of the slain, with much funeral pomp, and high encomiums on their valour;* in distributing the prizes of merit among the surviving warriors; in confirming their respective alliances; and in fortifying such places on their frontier as seemed most exposed to military excursions, or naval descents.

The plague
breaks out
in Athens.
A. C. 330.

The return of summer brought back into Attica the Peloponnesian invaders; but it likewise introduced a far more dreadful calamity. A destructive pestilence, engendered in Ethiopia, infected Egypt, and spread over great part of the dominions of the king of Persia. History does not explain by what means this fatal disorder was communicated to Greece. The year had been in

* This mournful solemnity as practised by the Athenians, is described by Thucydides, l. ii. p. 120, & seqq. The bones of the deceased were brought to a tabernacle previously erected for receiving them. On the day appointed for the funeral, they were conveyed from thence in cypress coffins, drawn on carriages, one for each tribe, to the public sepulchre in the Ceramicus, the most beautiful suburb of the city. The relations of the dead decked out the remains of their friends as they judged most proper. (See Lysias against Agoratus.) One empty bier was drawn along in honour of those whose bodies had not been recovered. Persons of every age, and of either sex, citizens and strangers, attended this solemnity. When the bones were deposited in the earth, some citizen of dignity and merit, named by the state, mounted a lofty pulpit, and pronounced the panegyric of the deceased, of their ancestors, and the Athenian republic. On this occasion, Pericles himself had been appointed to that solemn office. He performed it with great dignity. His speech, containing almost as many ideas as words, is incapable of abridgment; nor does its nature admit the insertion of it entire in the present history; in which eloquence is considered merely as an engine of government, and such speeches only introduced as influenced public resolutions and measures. It is however, worthy of observation, that his magnificent display of the advantages, the security, and the glory of Athens, forms a striking contrast with the unexpected calamities which soon overwhelmed his unhappy country.

other respects remarkably healthful. As the disease first appeared in the Piræus, the principal Athenian harbour, we may be allowed to conjecture, that it was imported from the east, either by the Athenian merchantmen, or by the ships of war, which annually sailed to that quarter, in order to levy money on the tributary cities. When its miserable symptoms broke out in the Piræus, the inhabitants suspected that the enemy had poisoned their wells. But it soon extended over the adjoining districts, and raged with peculiar violence in the populous streets which surrounded the citadel.

The malady appeared under various forms, in different constitutions; but its specific symptoms were invariably the same. It began with a burning heat in the head; the eyes were red and inflamed; the tongue and mouth had the colour of blood. The pain and inflammation descended to the breast with inexpressible anguish; the skin was covered with ulcers; the body of a livid red; the external heat not sensible to the touch, but the internal so violent, that the slightest covering could not be endured. An insatiable thirst was an universal symptom; and, when indulged increased the disorder. When the bowels were attacked, the patient soon perished through debility. Some lived seven or nine days, and died of a fever, with apparent remains of strength. The life was saved when the internal vigour diverted the course of the disease towards the extremities. Those who once recovered were never dangerously attacked a second time, from which they conceived a vain hope of proving thenceforth superior to every bodily infirmity. The disorder, which was always accompanied with an extreme dejection of spirits, often impaired the judgment as well as the memory. All remedies, human and divine, were employed in vain to stop the progress of this fatal contagion. The miserable crowds expired in the temples, preferring unavailing prayers to the gods. A shocking spectacle was seen round the sacred fountains, where multitudes lay dead, or perishing in agonizing torture. At

Description
of that ma-
lady.

Its effects
on the
mind,

length all medical assistance was despised,* and all religious ceremonies neglected. Continually suffering or apprehending the most dreadful calamities, the Athenians became equally regardless of laws human and divine. The fleeting moment only was theirs. About the future they felt no concern, nor did they believe it of concern to the gods, since all, good or bad, alike perished. Decency no longer imposing respect, the only pursuit was that of present pleasure. To beings of an hour, the dread of punishment formed no restraint; to victims of misery, conscience presented no terrors. Athens thus exhibited at once whatever is most afflicting in wretchedness, and most miserable in vice, uniting to the rage of disease the more destructive fury of unbridled passions.

While the city fell a prey to these accumulated evils, the country was laid waste by an implacable enemy. On the present occasion, the confederates advanced beyond Athens; they destroyed the works of the miners, on mount Laurium; and, having ravaged all that southern district, as well as the coast opposite to Eubœa and Naxos, they traced a line of devastation along the Marathonian shore, the glorious scene of an immortal victory, obtained by the valour of Athens, in defence of those very states by which her own territories were now so cruelly desolated.

* The supposed decree of the Athenians in favour of Hippocrates, says, that his scholars showed the means both of preventing and curing the plague. *Ταῖς χρηρθεραπείας ασφαλῶς διαφεύξασθαι τον λοιμον*; and again, *Οπως τε ιατρικη δοθεισα ασφαλῶς σωζει τους χαμνοντας*. Hippocrates, p. 1290. This decree, therefore, as well as the letters of Hippocrates, mentioning the plague at Athens, are unquestionably spurious. The malady is minutely described by Thucydides, l. ii. c. xlvii; by Lucretius, l. vi. ver. 1136. and seqq. Diodorus, l. xii. differs widely from them both, probably having copied from Ephorus and Theopompus. Hippocrates has several cases of the plague from Thasos, Abdera, &c. but not one from Athens. See Hippocrat. de Morbis Epidem.

If conscious wisdom and rectitude were not superior to every assault of fortune, the manly soul of Pericles must have sunk under the weight of such multiplied calamities. But his fortitude still supported him amidst the flood of public and domestic wo. With decent and magnanimous composure, he beheld the unhappy fate of his numerous and flourishing family, successively snatched away by the rapacious pestilence. At the funeral of the last of his sons, he dropped, indeed, a few reluctant tears of paternal tenderness; but ashamed of this momentary weakness, he bent his undejected mind to the defence of the republic. Having collected an hundred Athenian, together with fifty Chian or Lesbian vessels, he sailed through the Saronic gulf, and ravaged the unprotected coasts of Elis, Argos, and Laconia. While this armament weighed anchor in the Piræus, there happened an eclipse of the sun,* which terrified the superstitious mariners, whose minds were already clouded by calamity. The pilot of the admiral galley betrayed the most unmanly cowardice, when Pericles, throwing a cloak before his eyes, asked, "whether the obscurity surprised him?" the pilot answering him in the negative, "Neither," rejoined Pericles, "ought an eclipse of the sun, occasioned by the intervention of a revolving planet, which intercepts its light."

Magnanimity of Pericles.

Having arrived on the Argolic coast, the Athenians laid siege to the sacred city Epidaurus, whose inhabitants gloried in the peculiar favour of Æsculapius. The plague again breaking out in the fleet, was naturally ascribed to the vengeance of that offended divinity. They raised the siege of Epidaurus; nor were their operations more successful against Trœzené, Hermioné, and other Peloponnesian cities. They took only the small fortress of Prasiæ, a sea-port of Laconia; after which they returned to the Piræus, afflicted with the

His unfortunate expedition to the Peloponnesus. Olymp. lxxxvii. 3. A. C. 430.

* Plutarch. in Pericl. But as Thucydides mentions no such eclipse that summer, although extremely attentive in recording such phenomena, we may suspect the chronology of Plutarch.

pestilence, and without having performed any thing suitable to the greatness of the armament, or the public expectation.

Athenians more unfortunate in Thrace. The Athenian expedition into Thrace was still more unfortunate. Into that country Agnon conducted a body of four thousand men, to co-operate with Phromio in the siege of Potidæ. But in the space of forty days, he lost one thousand and fifty soldiers in the plague; and the only consequence of his expedition was, to infect the northern army with that melancholy disorder.

Pericles traduced. These multiplied disasters reduced the Athenians to despair. Their sufferings exceeded example and belief, while they were deprived of the only expected consolation, the pleasure of revenge. The bulk of the people desired peace on any terms. Ambassadors were sent to Sparta, but not admitted to an audience. The orators clamoured and traduced Pericles. The undiscerning populace ascribed their misfortunes to the unhappy effect of his counsels: but his magnanimity did not yet forsake him; and for the

The magnanimous firmness of his last advice to the Athenians.

last time, he addressed the assembly: "Your anger, Athenians! occasions no surprise, because it comes not unexpected. Your complaints excite no resentment, because to complain is the right of the miserable. Yet, as you mistake both the cause and the measure of your present calamity, I will venture to expose such dangerous, and, if not speedily corrected, such fatal errors. The justice and necessity of the war I have often had occasion to explain: it is just, that you, who have protected and saved, should govern Greece; it is necessary, if you would assert your pre-eminence, that you should now resist the Peloponnesians. On maintaining this resolution, not your honour only, but your safety depends. The sovereignty of Greece cannot, like an empty pageant of grandeur, be taken up with indifference, or without danger laid down. That well-earned dominion, which you have sometimes exercised tyrannically, must be upheld and defended, otherwise you must submit, without resource, to the resentment of your injured allies, and the animosity of your invete-

rate enemies. The hardships, to which you were exposed from the latter, I foresaw and foretold; the pestilence, that sudden and improbable calamity, it was impossible for human prudence to conjecture; yet great and unexpected as our misfortunes have been, and continue, they are still accidental and transitory, while the advantages of this necessary war are permanent, and its glory will be immortal. The greatness of that empire which we strive to uphold, extends beyond the territories of our most distant allies. Of the two elements, destined for the use of men, the sea and land, we absolutely command the one, nor is there any kingdom or republic, or confederacy, in a condition to dispute our dominion. Let this consideration elevate our hopes; and personal afflictions will be drowned in the tide of public prosperity. Let us bear, with resignation, the strokes of Providence; and we shall repel, with vigour, the assaults of your enemies. It is the hereditary and glorious distinction of our republic, never to yield to adversity. We have defied danger, expended treasure and blood; and, amidst obstinate and formidable wars, augmented the power, and extended the fame, of a city unrivalled in wealth, populousness, and splendour, and governed by laws and institutions worthy of its magnificence and renown. If Athens must perish (as what human grandeur is not subject to decay?) let her never fall, at least, through *our* pusillanimity, a fall that would cancel the merit of our former virtue, and destroy at once that edifice of glory which it has been the work of ages to rear. When our walls and harbours are no more; when the terror of our navy shall have ceased, and our external magnificence have fallen to decay, the glory of Athens shall remain: this is the prize which I have hitherto exhorted, and still exhort you to defend, regardless of the clamours of sloth, the suspicions of cowardice, or the persecution of envy."

Such were the sentiments of Pericles, who on this occasion, declared to his assembled countrymen, with the freedom of conscious merit, that he felt himself inferior to none in wisdom to discover, and abilities to explain and promote, the measures

Death and
character of
Pericles.
Olymp.
lxxxvii. 4.
A. C. 429.

most honourable and useful ; that he was a sincere and ardent lover of the republic, unbiassed by the dictates of selfishness, unseduced by the allurements of partiality. The anger of the Athenians evaporated in imposing on him a small fine, and shortly afterwards, they re-elected him general. The integrity and manly firmness of his mind restored the fainting courage of the republic. They rescued the dignity of Pericles from the rage of popular frenzy ; but they could not defend his life against the infectious malignity of the pestilence. He died two years and six months after the commencement of the war. The character which he draws of himself is confirmed by the impartial voice of history, which adds a few circumstances fitted to confirm the texture of a virtuous and lasting fame. During the first invasion of the Peloponnesians, he declared that he would convey his extensive and valuable estate to the public, if it should be excepted from the general devastation, by the policy or the gratitude of Archidamus, his hereditary guest and friend.* Yet this generous patriot lived with the most exemplary economy in his personal and domestic expense. His death-bed was surrounded by his numerous admirers, who dwelt with complacence on the illustrious exploits of his glorious life. While they recounted the wisdom of his government, and enumerated the long series of his victories by sea and land, "You forget," said the dying statesman and sage, "you forget the only valuable part of my character : none of my fellow-citizens was ever compelled through any action of mine, to assume a mourning robe."† He expired, teaching an invaluable lesson to human kind, that in the last important hour, when all other objects disappear, or totally lose their value, the recollection of an innocent life is still present to the mind, and still affords consolation, more valuable than Pericles could derive from his nine trophies erected over the enemies of his country, from his long and prosperous administration of forty years, the depth of his political wisdom, the pre-eminence of his military and naval skill, and the immortal fame of his matchless eloquence.

* Thucyd. p. 108.

† Plut. in Pericl.

CHAP. XVI.

Subsequent Events of the War.—Platzæa taken.—Revolt of Lesbos.—Description and History of that Island.—Nature of its political Connexion with Athens.—Address of Lesbos.—Its Capital besieged by the Athenians.—Measures of the Peloponnesians for relieving it.—Mitylené surrenders.—Deliberations in Athens concerning the Treatment of the Prisoners.—Re-settlement of the Affairs of Lesbos.—The Corinthians foment Factions in Corcyra.—Sedition in that Island.—The contending Factions respectively supported by the Athenians and Peloponnesians.—Progress, Termination, and Consequences of the Sedition.

THE dignity and vigour of the republic seemed to perish with Pericles, and several years elapsed, scarcely distinguished by any event that tended to vary the uniformity, much less to decide the fortune, of the war. While the Peloponnesians invaded Attica, the Athenian fleet annually ravaged the coast of Peloponnesus. In vain the inhabitants of that country, little accustomed to the sea, collected ships and used their utmost endeavours to contend with the experienced skill of the Athenian mariners. They were always defeated, and often by an inferior force; one proof among many, that naval superiority is slowly acquired and slowly lost. Neither the Athenians nor the Peloponnesians derived any effectual assistance from their respective alliances with Sitalces and Perdiccas. The former, reinforced by many independent tribes of Thrace, who were allured to his standard by the hopes of plunder, poured down an hundred and fifty thousand men on the Macedonian coast. But a hasty agreement between the

Events of
the four
following
years of the
war.
Olymp.
lxxxvii. 4.
A. C. 429
—425.

two kings dissipated that numerous and desultory band with the same rapidity with which it had been collected.*

One benefit, indeed, the Athenians received from Sitalces, if that can be reckoned a benefit, which enabled them to commit an action of enormous cruelty. He put into their hands Aristæus, the Corinthian, a bold and determined enemy of their republic; and actually travelling through Thrace into Persia, to solicit money from Artaxerxes to support the war against them. Both Aristæus and his colleagues in the embassy suffered an ignominious death.

The success of the adverse parties was equally balanced in the sieges of Potidæa and Platæa. Taking of Potidæa; Olymp. lxxxvii. 4. A. C. 429. The former, having surrendered on capitulation, was occupied by new inhabitants. The expelled citizens retired to Olynthus and other places of the Chalcidicé, where they strengthened and exasperated the foes of Athens. Platæa also capitulated, after a long and spirited resistance during five years. Notwithstanding the warm and affecting remonstrances of the citizens who had acted such an illustrious part in the Persian war, when the Thebans behaved most disgracefully, the capitulation was shamefully violated by the Spartans, who sacrificed to the resentment of Thebes, the eternal enemy of Platæa, two hundred brave men, whose courage and fidelity merited a better fate. But the youth of Platæa still flourished in the bosom of Athens, and were destined, in a future age, to reassume the dignity of independent government, which always formed the highest ambition of their small but magnanimous community.

Of Platæa. Olymp. lxxxviii. 2. A. C. 427.

Among the transactions of this otherwise unimportant period, happened the revolt of Lesbos, and the sedition of Corcyra. Both events deeply affected the interests of Athens; and the former is distinguished by such circumstances as serve to illustrate the political

Revolt of Lesbos.

* Thucydid. p. 167—170.

arrangements of the times, while the latter exhibits a striking but gloomy picture of Grecian manners.

The island of Lesbos, extending above an hundred and fifty miles in circumference, is the largest, except Eubœa, in the Ægean sea. Originally planted by Eolians, Lesbos was the mother of many Eolic colonies. They were established on the opposite continent, and separated from their metropolis by a strait of seven miles, which expands itself into the gulf of Thebé, and is beautifully diversified by the Hecatonnesian and Arginusian isles, of old sacred to Apollo. The happy temperature of the climate of Lesbos conspired with the rich fertility of the soil to produce those delicious fruits and those exquisite wines, which are still acknowledged by modern travellers to deserve the encomiums so liberally bestowed on them by ancient writers.* The convenience of its harbours furnished another source of wealth and advantage to this delightful island, which as early as the age of Homer, was reckoned populous and powerful, and like the rest of Greece, at that time, governed by the moderate jurisdiction of hereditary princes. The abuse of royal power occasioned the dissolution of monarchy in Lesbos, as well as in the neighbouring isles. The rival cities of Mitylené and Methymna contended for republican pre-eminence. The former prevailed, and having reduced Methymna, as well as six cities of inferior note, began to extend its dominion beyond the narrow bounds of the island, and conquered a considerable part of Troas. Meanwhile the internal government of Mitylené was often disturbed by sedition, and sometimes usurped by tyrants. The wise Pittacus contemporary and rival of Solon, endeavoured to remedy these evils by giving his countrymen a body of laws, comprised in six hundred verses, which adjusted their political rights, and regulated their behaviour and manners.

Description
and history
of that
island.

* Mons. de Guys, Tournefort, &c. agree with Horace (*passim*) and Strabo, lxi. p. 584—657. from whom the following particulars, in the text, concerning Lesbos, are extracted.

The Lesbians afterwards underwent those general revolutions to which both the islands and the continent of Asia Minor were exposed from the Lydian and Persian power. Delivered from the yoke of Persia by the successful valour of Athens and Sparta, the Lesbians, as well as all the Greek settlements around them, spurned the tyrannical authority of Sparta and Pausanias, and ranged themselves under the honourable colours of Athens, which they thenceforth continued to respect in peace, and to follow in war.

Nature of its
political
connexion
with
Athens.

In the exercise of power, the Athenians displayed principles totally different from those by which they had attained it. The confederacy between Athens and Lesbos was still supported, however, by mutual fear, rather than by reciprocal affection.

During peace, the Lesbians dreaded the navy of Athens; the Athenians feared to lose the assistance of Lesbos in war. Besides this, the Athenians were of the Ionic, the Lesbians of the Eolic, race; and the latter justly regretted that the allies of Athens should be successively reduced to the condition of subjects. They perceived the artful policy of that republic in allowing the Chians and Lesbians alone to retain the semblance of liberty. While the Chians and Lesbians, still free in appearance, assisted in subduing the other confederates of Athens, that ambitious republic was always furnished with a plausible justification of her general oppression and tyranny; since it was natural to imagine that men, left to the unrestrained liberty of choice, should, in matters indifferent to themselves, prefer the cause of justice to that of usurpation. But even the apparent freedom which the Lesbians enjoyed had become extremely precarious. They felt themselves under a disagreeable necessity to sooth, to bribe, and to flatter the Athenian demagogues, and in all their transactions, with that imperious people, to testify mortifying deference or abject submission. Notwithstanding their watchful attention never designedly to offend, they were continually endangered by the quarrelsome humour of a capricious multitude, and had reason to dread, lest, in consequence of some unexpected gust

of passion, they should be compelled to demolish their walls, and to surrender their shipping; the punishments already inflicted on such of the neighbouring islands as had incurred the displeasure of Athens.

This uneasy situation naturally disposed the Lesbians, amidst the calamities of the second Peloponnesian invasion, heightened by the plague at Athens, to watch an opportunity for revolt. The following year was employed in assembling the scattered inhabitants of the island within the walls of Mitylené, in strengthening these walls, in fortifying their harbours, in augmenting their fleet, and in collecting troops and provisions from the fertile shores of the Euxine. But in the fourth year of the war, their design, yet unripe for execution, was made known to the Athenians by the inhabitants of Tenedos, the neighbours and enemies of Lesbos, as well as by the citizens of Methymna, the ancient rival of Mitylené, and by several malecontents in the Lesbian capital. Notwithstanding the concurrence of such powerful testimonies, the Athenian magistrates affected to disbelieve intelligence which their distressed circumstances rendered peculiarly alarming. The Lesbians, it was said, could never think of forsaking the alliance of a country which had always treated them with such distinguished favour, how powerfully soever they might be urged to that measure by the Thebans, their Eolian brethren, and the Spartans, their ancient confederates. Ambassadors, however, were sent to Lesbos, desiring an explanation of rumours so dishonourable to the fidelity and gratitude of the island.

Measures
of the Les-
bians pre-
vious to
their re-
volt.

Olymp.
lxxxviii. 1.
A. C. 428.

The ambassadors having confirmed the report, Athens equipped a fleet of forty sail, intending to attack the enemy by surprise, while they celebrated, with universal consent, the anniversary festival of Apollo, on the promontory of Malea. But this design was rendered abortive by the diligence of a Mitylenian traveller, who passing from Athens to Eubœa, proceeded southward to Geraistos, and, embarking in a merchant vessel, reached Lesbos in less than

Activity of
Athens.

three days from the time that he undertook this important service. His seasonable advice not only prevented the Mitylenians from leaving their city, but prepared them to appear, at the arrival of the enemy, in a tolerable posture of defence. This state of preparation enabled them to obtain from Cleipidas, the Athenian admiral, a suspension of hostilities, until they despatched an embassy to Athens, to remove, as they pretended, the groundless resentment of the people, and to give ample satisfaction to the magistrates.

On the part of the Lesbians, this transaction was nothing more than a contrivance to gain time. They expected no favour or forgiveness from the Athenian assembly; and while this illusive negotiation was carrying on at Athens, other ambassadors repaired secretly to Sparta, requesting that the Lesbians might be admitted into the Peloponnesian confederacy, and thus entitled to the protection of that powerful league. The Spartans referred them to the general assembly, which was to be soon held at Olympia, to solemnize the most splendid of all the Grecian festivals. After the games were ended, and the Athenians, who little suspected that such matters were in agitation, had returned home, the Lesbian ambassadors were favourably heard in a general convention of the Peloponnesian representatives or deputies, from whom they received assurance of immediate and effectual assistance.

This promise, however, was not punctually performed. The eyes of the Athenians opened to their danger; and, while the Peloponnesians prepared or deliberated, their more active enemies had already taken the field. Various skirmishes, in which the islanders showed little vigour in their own defence, engaged the neighbouring states of Lemnos and Imbros to send, on the first summons, considerable supplies of troops to their Athenian confederates; but, as the combined forces were still insufficient completely to invest Mitylené, a powerful reinforcement was sent from Athens; and before the beginning of winter, the place was blocked up by land, while an Athenian fleet occupied the harbour.

The unfavourable season, and still more, that dilatoriness which so often obstructed the measures of the confederates, prevented timely aid from arriving at Mitylené. But, in order to make a diversion in favour of their new allies, the Peloponnesians assembled a considerable armament at the isthmus, intending to convey their ships over land from Corinth to the sea of Athens, that they might thus infest the Athenian shores with their fleet, while the army carried on its usual ravages in the central parts of Attica. The activity of the Athenians defeated this design. Notwithstanding their numerous squadrons on the coasts of Peloponnesus, Thrace, and Lesbos, they immediately fitted out an hundred sail to defend their own shores. The Peloponnesian sailors, who had been hastily collected from the maritime towns, soon became disgusted with an expedition attended with unforeseen difficulties; and, as autumn advanced, the militia from the inland country grew impatient to return to their fields and vineyards. During winter, the Mitylenians were still disappointed in their hope of relief. They were encouraged, however, to persevere in resistance, by the arrival of Salæthus, a Spartan general of considerable merit, who having landed in an obscure harbour of the island, travelled by land towards Mitylené; and, during the obscurity of night, passed the Athenian wall of circumvallation, through favour of a breach made by a torrent. Salæthus gave the besieged fresh assurances that a powerful fleet would be sent to their assistance early in the spring; and that, at the same time, the Athenians should be harassed by an invasion more terrible and destructive than any which they had yet experienced.

Measures of the Peloponnesians for relieving it.

The latter part of the promise was indeed performed. The Peloponnesians invaded Attica. Whatever had been spared in former incursions, now fell a prey to their fury. But after Spring had considerably advanced, the long expected fleet was looked for in vain. The same procrastination and difficulties still retarded the preparations of the confederates; and

Imprudent conduct of Alcidas. Olymp. lxxxviii. 2. A. C. 427.

when at length forty sail were collected, the command was bestowed on the Spartan Alcidas a man totally devoid of that spirit and judgment essential to the character of a naval commander. Instead of sailing directly to the relief of Mitylené, he wasted much precious time in pursuing the Athenian merchantmen, in harassing the unfortified islands, and in alarming the defenceless and unwarlike inhabitants of Ionia, who could scarcely recover from their astonishment at seeing a Peloponnesian fleet in those seas. Many trading vessels, that sailed between the numerous islands and harbours on that extensive coast, fell into the hands of Alcidas; for when they descried his squadron, they attempted not to avoid it; many fearlessly approached it, as certainly Athenian. In consequence of this imprudence, Alcidas took a great number of prisoners, whom he butchered in cold blood at Myonnesus.

Mitylené
surrenders.
Olymp.
lxxxviii. 2.
A. C. 427.

This barbarity only disgraced himself, and injured the Spartan cause in Asia; many cities of which were previously ripe for revolt. Before he attempted to accomplish the main object of his expedition, the opportunity was forever lost by the surrender of Mitylené. Despair of assistance, and scarcity of provisions, had obliged Salæthus, who began himself by this time to suspect that the Peloponnesians had laid aside all thoughts of succouring the place, to arm* the populace, in order to make a vigorous assault on the Athenian lines. But the lower ranks of men, who in Lesbos, as well as in all the Grecian isles, naturally favoured the cause of Athens, the avowed patron of democracy, no sooner received their armour, than they refused to obey their superiors, and threatened, that unless the corn were speedily brought into the market-place, and equally divided among all the citizens, they would instantly submit to the besiegers. The aristocratical party prudently yielded to the torrent of popular fury, which they had not strength to

* He gave the populace, who were before light armed, heavy armour. Thucyd. p. 188. English cannot imitate his expression; ὀπλιζει τον δημον προτερον ψιλον οὐτα.

resist; and justly apprehensive, lest a more obstinate defence might totally exclude them from the benefit of capitulation, they surrendered to Paches, the Athenian commander, on condition that none of the prisoners should be enslaved or put to death, until their agents, who were immediately sent to implore the clemency of Athens, should return with the sentence of that republic.

The terms were accepted and ratified; but such were the furious resentments which prevailed in that age, such the dark suspicions, and such the total disregard to all laws of justice and humanity, that the Athenian army had no sooner taken possession of the place, than the chief authors and abettors of the revolt, judging it imprudent to trust their safety to the faith of treaties, and the sanctity of oaths, flew for protection to their temples and altars. This unseasonable diffidence (for Paches appears to have united uncommon humanity with a daring spirit, and great military abilities) betrayed conscious guilt, and enabled the Athenians to distinguish between their friends and enemies. The latter were protected by Paches, and prevailed on to withdraw from their sanctuaries. He afterwards sent them to the isle of Tenedos, until their fate, as well as that of their fellow-citizens, should be finally determined by the Athenian republic.

Terror of
the Lesbian
captives.

Immediately after the arrival of the Mitylenian ambassadors, the people of Athens had assembled to deliberate on this important subject. Agitated by the giddy transports of triumph over the rebellious ingratitude and perfidy of a people, who, though distinguished by peculiar favours, had deserted their protectors in the season of danger, the Athenians doomed to death all the Mitylenian citizens, and condemned the women and children to perpetual servitude. In one day the bill was proposed, the decree passed, and the same evening a galley was despatched to Paches, conveying this cruel and bloody resolution. But the night left room for reflection; and the feelings of humanity were awakened by the stings of remorse.

They are
doomed to
death by an
Athenian
decree.

In the morning, having assembled, as usual, in the public square, men were surprised and pleased to find the sentiments of their neighbours exactly corresponding with their own. Their dejected countenances met each other: they lamented, with one accord, the rashness and ferocity of their passion, and bewailed the unhappy fate of Mitylené, the destined object of their misguided frenzy. The Mitylenian ambassadors availed themselves of this sudden change of sentiment; a new assembly was convened, and the question submitted to a second deliberation.

Character of Cleon. A turbulent impetuous eloquence had raised the audacious profligacy of Cleon, from the lowest rank of life, to a high degree of authority in the Athenian assembly. The multitude were deceived by his artifices, and pleased with his frontless impudence, which they called honest boldness, and manly openness of character. His manners they approved in proportion as they resembled their own; and the worst of his vices found advocates among the dupes of his pretended patriotism. This violent demagogue, whose arrogant* presumption so unworthily succeeded the enlightened magnanimity of Pericles, had, in the former assembly, proposed, and carried the sanguinary decrees against Mitylené. He still persevered in supporting that atrocious measure, and upbraided the weak and wavering counsels of his countrymen, liable to be shaken by every gust of passion, and totally incapable of that stability essential in the management, indeed, of all great affairs, but particularly indispensable in the government of distant dependencies.

Cleon enforces that decree. “Such a temper of mind, (he had often ventured to declare, and would repeat the same disagreeable truth as often as their folly obliged him) was alike unworthy, and incapable of command. That a democracy

* The character of Cleon, sketched in miniature by Thucydides, pp. 193 and 266, is painted at full length by Aristophanes, in his comedy of *Ιππεις*, “The Horsemen.” Yet we could not safely trust the description of the angry satirist, who bore a personal grudge to Cleon, unless the principal strokes were justified by the impartial narrative of Thucydides.

was unfit for sovereign rule, past experience convinced him, and the present instance now confirmed his opinion. The empire of Athens could not be maintained without an undivided attachment, an unalterable adherence, to the interest and honour of the republic. But the masters of Greece were the slaves of their own capricious passions; excited at will by the perfidious voice of venal speakers, bribed to betray them. Lulled to a fatal repose by the softness of melodious words, they forgot the dignity of the state, and restrained their personal resentment against multiplied and unprovoked injuries. What was still more dangerous, they invited, by an ill-judged lenity, the imitation and continuance of such crimes as must terminate in public disgrace and irreparable ruin. What else can be expected from pardoning the aggravated guilt of Mitylené? Encouraged by this weakness, must not the neighbouring cities and islands, whose resources form the principal vigour of the republic, greedily seize the first opportunity of shaking off the yoke, which they have long reluctantly borne; and follow the example of a revolt, which, without presenting them with the fear of danger, promised them the hope of deliverance?"

This sanguinary speech was answered by Deodatus, a man endowed with a happy moderation of mind, joined to a profound knowledge of government, and a deep insight into human nature.

Deodatus
opposes it
with equal
address and
spirit.

In the former assembly, this respectable orator had ventured, almost single and alone, to plead the cause of the Mitylenians, and to assert the rights of humanity. He observed, "that assemblies were liable to be misled by the fury of resentment, as well as by the weakness of compassion; and that errors of the former kind were productive of consequences not less destructive, and always followed by a far more bitter repentance. Against vain slanders and calumny no man is secure; but a true patriot must learn to despise such unmanly reproaches. Undaunted by opposition, he will offer good counsel, to which there are not any greater enemies than haste and anger. For my part, I stand up neither to defend the Mitylenians, nor to

waste time in fruitless accusations. They have injured us most outrageously, yet I would not advise you to butcher them, unless *that* can be proved expedient; neither, were they objects of forgiveness, would I advise you to pardon them,* unless that were conducive to the public interest, the only point on which our present deliberation turns. Guided by vulgar prejudices, Cleon has loudly asserted, that the destruction of the Mitylenians is necessary to deter neighbouring cities from rebellion. But distant subjects must be kept in obedience by the mildness of discretionary caution, not by the rigour of sanguinary examples. What people were ever so mad as to revolt, without expecting either through their domestic strength, or the assistance of foreign powers, to make good their pretensions? Men who have known liberty, how sweet it is, ought not to be punished too severely for aspiring at that inestimable enjoyment. But their growing disaffection must be watched with care, and anticipated by diligence; they must be prevented from taking the first step towards emancipation; and taught, if possible, to regard it as a thing altogether unattainable.

“Yet such is the nature of man, considered either individually or collectively, that a law of infallible prevention will never be enacted. Of all crimes that any reasonable creature can commit, Desire is the fore-runner, and Hope the attendant. These invisible principles within, are too powerful for external terrors; nor has the increasing severity of laws rendered crimes less frequent in latter times, than during the mildness of the heroic ages, when few punishments were capital. While human nature remains the same, weakness will be distrustful, necessity will be daring, poverty will beget fraud, power will excite injustice, misery will sink into meanness, and prosperity swell into presumption. There are other contingences, which stir up the mutiny of passions, too stubborn for control. The authority of government can neither change the combina-

* This is speaking like an orator. It will appear in the sequel, that Deodatus by no means considered the innocence or guilt of the Mitylenians as things indifferent.

tion of events, nor interrupt the occasions of fortune. Impelled by such causes, the selfish desires of men will hurry them into wickedness and vice, whatever penalties await them. The imagination becomes familiar with one scale of punishment, as well as with another; and, in every degree, hope renders it alike ineffectual and impotent; since neither individuals, nor communities would commit wrong if they believed that it must infallibly subject them to punishment, small or great. When individuals venture on crimes, they always expect to elude the vengeance of law. When communities rebel, they expect to render their revolt, not the occasion of triumph to their enemies, but the means of their own deliverance and security.

“The severe punishment of Mitylené cannot, therefore produce the good consequences with which Cleon has flattered you. But this cruel measure will be attended with irreparable prejudice to your interest. It will estrange the affections of your allies; provoke the resentment of Græcæ; excite the indignation of mankind; and, instead of preventing rebellion, render it more frequent and more dangerous. When all hopes of success have vanished, your rebellious subjects will never be persuaded to return to their duty. They will seek death in the field, rather than await it from the hand of the executioner. Though reduced to the last extremity, they will spurn submission, and gathering courage from despair, either repel your assaults, or fall an useless prey, weak and exhausted, incapable of indemnifying you for the expense of the war, or of raising those subsidies and contributions, which rendered their subjugation a reasonable object either of interest or ambition.

“The revolt of Mitylené was the work of an aristocratical faction, fomented by the Lacedæmonians and Thebans. The great body of the people had no sooner provided themselves with arms, than they discovered their affection for Athens. It would be most cruel and most ungrateful, to confound the innocent with the guilty, to involve friends and foes in undistinguished ruin. Yet this odious measure would show more

weakness than cruelty, more folly than injustice. What benefit could the enemies of Athens more earnestly desire? What boon could the aristocratical factions, so profusely scattered over Greece, more anxiously request from heaven? Furnished with your sanguinary decree against Mitylené, they would for ever alienate from the republic the affections of her subjects and confederates; for having once seduced them to revolt, they might unanswerably convince them, that safety could only be purchased by persevering in rebellion, and that to return to duty was to submit to death."

His opinion
prevails.

The moderation and good sense of Deodatus (such was the influence of Cleon) were approved only by a small majority of voices. Yet it remained uncertain, whether this late and reluctant repentance would avail the Mitylenians, who, before any advice of it arrived, might be condemned and executed in consequence of the former decree. A galley was instantly furnished with every thing that might promote expedition. The Mitylenian deputies promised invaluable rewards to the rowers. But the fate of a numerous, and lately flourishing community, still depended on the uncertainty of winds and currents. The first advice-boat had sailed, as the messenger of bad news, with a slow and melancholy progress. The second advanced with the rapid movements of hope and joy. Not an adverse blast opposed her course. The necessity of food and sleep never restrained a moment the labour of the oar: and her diligence was rewarded by reaching Lesbos in time to check the cruel hand of the executioner.

Narrow
escape of
the Mity-
lenians.

The bloody sentence had been just read, and orders were preparing for carrying it into effect, when the critical arrival of the Athenian galley converted the lamentable outcries, or gloomy despair, of a whole republic, into expressions of admiration and gratitude.

Re-settle-
ment of
affairs in
Lesbos.

The punishment, however, of Mitylené was still sufficiently severe, even according to the rigorous maxims of Grecian policy. The prisoners, who

had been sent to Tenedos, were* transported to Athens. They exceeded a thousand in number, and were indiscriminately condemned to death.

Olymp.
lxxxviii. 2.
A. C. 427.

Salæthus, the Spartan general, shared the same fate, after descending to many mean contrivances to save his life. The walls of Mitylené were demolished, its shipping was sent to Athens, and its territory divided into three thousand portions, of which three hundred were consecrated to the gods, and the rest distributed by lot among the people of Athens. The Lesbians were still allowed to cultivate, as tenants, their own fields, paying for each share an annual rent amounting in value to six pounds nine shillings sterling.*

The activity and judgment of Paches thus effected an important conquest to his country. Though the affairs of Lesbos might have required his undivided attention, he no sooner was apprised of the appearance of the Peloponnesian fleet, than he immediately put to sea, protected the allies of Athens, and chased the enemy from those shores. During the whole time of his command, he behaved with firmness tempered by humanity. But at his return to Athens, he met with the usual reward of superior merit. He was accused of misconduct; and finding sentence ready to be pronounced against him, his indignation rose so high, that he slew himself in court.†

Merit and
persecution
of Paches.

The Spartan admiral, Alcidas, met on the other hand, with a reception (such is the blindness of popular prejudice!) far better than belonged to his behaviour. The Peloponnesian fleet of forty sail, imprudently intrusted to his command, retired ingloriously, after an expensive and fruitless expedition; to the protection of their friendly harbours. A northerly wind, however, drove them on the shores of Crete: from whence they dropped in successively to the Port of Elian Cyllené, which had recovered the disaster inflicted on it by the Corcyreans at the beginning of the war, and become the ordinary rendezvous of the Pelopon-

Operations
of the Spar-
tan fleet.

* Thucyd. p. 173—206.

† Plutarch in Nicias, & in Aristid.

nesian fleet. In this place, Alcidas found thirteen galleys commanded by Brasidas, a Spartan of distinguished valour and abilities, purposely chosen to assist the admiral with his counsels. This small squadron had orders to join the principal armament; with which the confederates, as their design had miscarried at Lesbos, purposed to undertake an expedition against Corcyra, then agitated by the tumult of a dangerous sedition.

Intrigues of the Corinthians with the Corcyrean prisoners,

Among the hostilities already related between the republics of Corinth and Corcyra, we described the enterprises by which the Corinthians had possessed themselves of twelve hundred Corcyrean prisoners. Many of these persons were descended from the first families in the island; a circumstance on which the policy of Corinth founded an extensive plan of artifice and ambition. The Corcyreans, instead of feeling the rigours of captivity, or experiencing the stern severity of republican resentment, were treated with the liberal and endearing kindness of Grecian hospitality. Having acquired their confidence by good offices, the Corinthians insinuated to them, in the unguarded hours of convivial merriment, the danger as well as the disgrace of their connexion with Athens, the imperious tyrant of her allies; and represented their shameful ingratitude in deserting Corinth, to which the colony of Corcyra owed not only its early happiness and prosperity, but its original establishment and existence. These arguments, seasonably repeated, and urged with much address, at length proved effectual. The Corcyreans recovered their freedom, and returned to their native country; and while they pretended to be collecting the sum of eight hundred talents (about an hundred and fifty thousand pounds sterling) to pay their ransom, they left nothing untried to detach Corcyra from the Athenian interest.

excite dangerous factions in Corcyra.

Their first expedient for accomplishing this purpose was, to traduce the popular leaders, all of them steadfast partisans to that republic. Accusations, impeachments, all the artifices and chicane

of legal prosecution, were directed and played off against them. The demagogues, who were not of a temper to brook such injuries, retorted on their antagonists with equal ingenuity, and far superior success. Peithias, the most distinguished advocate of the Athenian or democratic party, accused five ring-leaders of the opposite faction of having destroyed the fence which enclosed the grove of Jupiter; a trespass estimated by the Corcyrean law at a severe pecuniary punishment.* In vain the persons accused denied the charge; in vain after conviction before the senate, they fled as supplicants to the altars. They could obtain no mitigation of the amercement. The demagogue was inflexible; and his influence with his colleagues in the senate, of which he happened that year to be a member, determined them to execute the law in its utmost rigour.

Exasperated by this severity, and not doubting that during the administration of the present senate, many similar prosecutions would be raised against them, the aristocratical party entered into a conspiracy for defending themselves and their country against the oppressive injustice of Athens and Athenian partisans. On this emergency they acted like men who knew the danger of delay. Having fortified their cause with a sufficient number of adherents, they armed themselves with concealed daggers, suddenly rushed into the senate-house, and assassinated Peithias, with sixty of his friends. This boldness struck their opponents with terror. Such persons as felt themselves most obnoxious to the conspirators, immediately fled to the harbour, embarked, and sailed to Athens.

The people of Corcyra, thus deprived of their leaders by an event equally unexpected and atrocious, were seized with such astonishment as suspended their power of action. Before they had

Assassination of the demagogues.

Sedition in Corcyra. Olymp. lxxxviii. 2. A. C. 427.

* The fine was for every pale, a stater (one pound and nine pence sterling.) Such causes were frequent in other parts of Greece, as we learn from the oration of Lysias in defence of a citizen accused of cutting down a consecrated olive. See my translation of Lysias and Isocrates, p. 377.

sufficiently recovered themselves to take the proper measures for revenge, or even for defence, the arrival of a Corinthian vessel, and a Lacedæmonian embassy, encouraged their bloody opponents to complete the destruction which they had begun. The attack was made at the hour of full assembly; the forum, or public square, presented a scene of horror; the streets of Corcyra streamed with blood. The unguarded citizens were incapable of making resistance against such sudden and unforeseen fury. They fled in trepidation from the forum, and the more spacious streets. Some took possession of the citadel; others, of the Hillæan harbour; and in general occupied, before the evening, the higher and more remote parts of the town. Their adversaries kept possession of the market place, round which most of their houses stood, or assembled in the principal harbour, that points towards Epirus, from which they expected succour. The day following was spent in doubtful skirmishes, and in summoning from the country the assistance of the peasants, or rather slaves, by whom chiefly the lands of the island were cultivated. These naturally ranged themselves on the side of the people: the Corcyrean women zealously embraced the same party, and sustained the tumult with more than female courage. One inactive day intervened. The partisans of aristocracy were reinforced by eight hundred auxiliaries from the continent of Epirus. But in the succeeding engagement, the numbers and fury of the slaves, who seized the present opportunity to resent the barbarous cruelty of their respective masters; and the generous ardour of the women, rendered the friends of liberty completely victorious. The vanquished fled towards the forum and the great harbour. Even these posts they soon despaired of being able to maintain; and, to escape immediate death, set fire to the surrounding houses, which being soon thrown into a blaze, presented an impervious obstacle to the rage of the assailants. The most beautiful part of Corcyra was thus destroyed in one night: the houses, shops, magazines, and much valuable merchandise, were totally consumed; and, had an easterly wind aided the conflagration, the whole city must in a short time

have been reduced to ashes. Amidst this scene of confusion and horror, the Corinthian galley, together with the auxiliaries from Epirus, retired in consternation from a place that seemed doomed to inevitable destruction.

Next day twelve Athenian galleys arrived from Naupactus, containing, besides their ordinary complement of men, five hundred heavy armed Messenians. Nicostratus, who commanded this armament, had, upon the first intelligence of the sedition, hastened with the utmost celerity to support the cause of Athens and democracy. He had the good fortune not only to anticipate the Peloponnesian squadron, which was so anxiously expected by the enemy, but to find his friends triumphant. They had obtained, however, a melancholy triumph over the splendour of their country, which, if its factions were not speedily reconciled, was threatened with total ruin. Nicostratus omitted nothing that seemed proper to heal the wounds of that afflicted commonwealth. By authority, entreaties, and commands, he persuaded the contending parties to accommodate matters between themselves, and to renew their alliance with Athens. Having happily terminated this business, he was intent on immediate departure; but the managers for the people proposed, that he should leave five of his ships with them, to deter the enemy from any fresh commotion, and take in exchange five of theirs, which should be instantly manned to attend him on his station. With this proposal he complied; and the Corcyreans selected the mariners destined to sail with Nicostratus. Those named for his service were, to a man, partisans of the oligarchy and Lacedæmon; a circumstance which created in them just alarm, lest they should be transported to Athens, and notwithstanding the faith of treaties, condemned to death. They took refuge in the temple of Castor and Pollux; the assurances of Nicostratus could scarcely remove them from this sanctuary; and all his declarations and oaths were unable to prevail on them to embark. The opposite party asserted, that this want of confidence betrayed

An Athenian squadron arrives at Corcyra.

not only the consciousness of past, but the fixed purpose of future, guilt; and would have immediately despatched them with their daggers, had not Nicostratus interposed. Terrified at these proceedings, the unhappy victims of popular malice and suspicion assembled, to the number of four hundred, and retired with one accord, as supplicants, into the temple of Juno. From this sanctuary they were persuaded to arise, and transported to a neighbouring island, or rather rock, small, barren, and uninhabited. There they remained four days, supplied barely with the means of subsistence and impatiently waiting their fate.

The Peloponnesian fleet appears off the coast.

In this posture of affairs a numerous fleet was seen approaching from the south. This was the long expected squadron of fifty-three ships commanded by Alcidas and Brasidas. With the unfortunate slowness inherent in all the measures of the confederacy, this armament arrived too late to support the sinking cause of their friends. The Peloponnesian commanders, however, might still expect to take an useless but agreeable vengeance on their enemies. To accomplish this design they prepared to attack the harbour of Corcyra, while all was yet hurry and confusion. The islanders had sixty vessels fit for sea, in which they embarked with the utmost expedition, and successively sailed forth as each happened to be ready. Their ardour and impatience disdained the judicious advice of Nicostratus, who alone, calm and unmoved amidst a scene of unexpected danger, exhorted them to keep the harbour until they were all prepared to advance in line of battle, generously offering, with his twelve Athenian galleys, to sustain the first assaults of the enemy.

A sea-fight in which the Peloponnesians prevail.

The Peloponnesians, observing the hostile armament scattered and unsupported, divided their own fleet into two squadrons. The one, consisting of twenty galleys, attacked the Corcyreans: the other amounting to thirty-three, endeavoured to surround the Athenians. But the address of the Athenian mariners frustrated this attempt. Their front was extended with

equal order and celerity. They assaulted, at once, the opposite wings of the Peloponnesian fleet, intercepted their motion, and skilfully encircled them around, hoping to drive their ships against each other, and to throw them into universal disorder. Perceiving these manœuvres, the ships which followed the Corcyreans left off the pursuit, and steered to support the main squadron: and now, with their whole embodied strength, they prepared to pour on the Athenians. These prudently declined the shock of superior force; but the glory of their retreat was equal to a victory. They seasonably shifted their helms, slowly and regularly gave way, and thus covered the retreat of their Corcyrean allies, who, having already lost thirteen vessels, were totally unable to renew the engagement.

Having reached the harbour, the Corcyreans still feared lest the enemy, in pursuance of their victory, should make a descent on the coast, and even assault the city. But the manly counsels of Brasidas, who strongly recommended the latter measure, were defeated by the timidity and incapacity of Alcidas. The Corcyreans seized, therefore, the present opportunity to remove the supplicants from the uninhabited islands to the temple of Juno, as less exposed there, to be discovered and taken up by the Peloponnesian fleet. Next day they entered into accommodation with these unhappy men, and even admitted several of them to embark in thirty vessels, which they hastily equipped, as the last defence of the island. The Peloponnesians, meanwhile, still prevented, by the dastardly counsels of Alcidas, from attacking the capital, wreaked their resentment on the adjacent territory. But before the dawn of the succeeding day, they were alarmed by lights on the northern shore of Leucadia, which by their number and disposition, signified the approach of an Athenian fleet of sixty sail.

The misconduct of Alcidas saves Corcyra.

The situation of the invaders was now extremely dangerous. If they stretched out to sea, they might be obliged to encounter the unbroken vigour of

The Athenians reinforced.

the Athenians: if they cruised off the coast, they would be compelled to contend, not only with the power of Athens, but with the resentment of Corcyra. One measure alone promised

The Peloponnesians retire from Corcyra.

the hope of safety: it was immediately adopted. Having crept along the shore to Leucadia, they carried their vessels across the isthmus,* afterwards overflowed by the sea, but which then joined

the peninsula, now the island of Leucas, to the adjacent coast of Acarnania. From thence sailing through the narrow seas, which separate the neighbouring isles from the continent, they escaped without discovery, and safely arrived in the harbour of Cylléné.

Massacre of the Lacedæmonian partisans.

The democratical party in Corcyra soon perceived the flight of the enemy, and descried the approach of the Athenian fleet, commanded by Eurymedon. These fortunate events which ought

in generous minds to have effaced the dark impressions of enmity and revenge, only enabled the Corcyreans to display the deep malignity of their character. They commanded the thirty galleys, recently manned, to pass in review, and in proportion as they discovered their enemies, punished them with immediate death. Fifty of the principal citizens, who still clung to the altars in the temple of Juno, they seduced from their asylum, and instantly butchered.

Malignant passions of the Corcyreans.

Politics and party formed the pretence for violence, while individuals gratified their private passions, and wreaked vengeance on their personal foes. The sedition became every hour more fierce;

the confusion thickened; the whole city was filled with consternation and horror. The altars and images of the gods were surrounded by votaries, whom even the terrors of a superstitious age could no longer protect. The miserable victims were dragged from the most revered temples, whose walls and pavement were now first stained with civil blood.

* D'Anville considers the ancient Leucadia as an island; Ptolemy speaks of it as a peninsula.

Many withdrew themselves by a voluntary death from the fury of their enemies. In every house and in every family, scenes were transacted too horrid for description. Parents, children, brothers, and pretended friends, seized the desired moment for gratifying their latent malignity, and perpetrating crimes without a name. The unfeeling Eurymedon (whose character, as will shortly appear, was a disgrace to human nature) showed neither ability nor inclination to stop the carnage. During the space of six days that his fleet continued in the Corcyrean harbour, the actors in this lamentable tragedy continually aggravated the enormity of their guilt, and improved in the refinement of their cruelty. A dreadful calm succeeded this violent agitation. Five hundred partizans of aristocracy escaped to the coast of Epirus; and the Athenian fleet retired.

The fugitives, instead of rejoicing in their safety, thought only of revenge. They sent agents to Lacedæmon and Corinth. By describing their sufferings to the astonished Epirots, they excited their compassion, and acquired their assistance.

The aristocratical party receive assistance from Epirus.

The severity of the prevailing party in Corcyra increased the number of outlaws: who, at length, finding themselves sufficiently powerful to attack and conquer the island, which, from the moment of their banishment, they had infested by naval descents, sailed with their whole strength for that purpose in boats provided by the Barbarians. In landing at Corcyra, the rowers drove with such violence against the shore, as broke many of their vessels in pieces; the rest they immediately burned, disdaining safety unless purchased by victory. This desperate measure deterred opposition; they advanced, seized and fortified, Mount Isthoné; a strong post in the neighbourhood of the city, from which they ravaged the territory, and subjected their enemies to the multiplied evils of war and famine.

An epidemical disorder increased the measure of their calamities. The flames of civil discord, which had never been thoroughly extinguished,

The Athenians again arrive in the island.

Olymp.
lxxxviii. 4.
A. C. 425.

again broke out within the walls. The misery of the Corcyreans was verging to despair, when an Athenian fleet of forty sail appeared off the coast. This armament was commanded by Eurymedon and Sophocles. It was principally destined against Sicily, as we shall have occasion to relate, but ordered in its voyage thither to touch at Corcyra, and regulate the affairs of that island. This unexpected assistance enabled the besieged to become the besiegers. The out-work and defences of Mount Istoné were successively taken, and the parties who defended them gradually retired to the more elevated branches, and, at length, to the very summit, of the mountain. They were on the point of being driven from thence, and of falling into the hands of enemies exasperated by innumerable injuries suffered and inflicted. Alarmed by this reflection, they called out to the Athenians for quarter, and surrendered to Eurymedon and Sophocles, on condition that their fate should be decided by the people of Athens. They were sent prisoners to the small island of Ptychia, lying a little eastward of the city Corcyra, till it should be found convenient to transport them to Athens, and commanded not to make any attempt to stir from thence, under pain of annulling the capitulation which had been granted them.

If the malignity of the Corcyrean populace had not exceeded the ordinary standard of human perversity, their resentment must have been softened by the sudden transition wrought by accident in their favour. But their first concern was to intercept the precarious clemency of Athens, and to make sure the destruction of their adversaries. This atrocious design was executed by a stratagem equally detestable, uniting, by a singular combination, whatever is savage in ferocity, and base in perfidy. By means of proper agents despatched secretly to Ptychia, the leaders of the popular faction acquainted those of the prisoners, with whom, in peaceable times, they had respectively lived in habits of intimacy, that the Athenians had determined to give them up indiscriminately to the fury of the populace.

Perfidious
cruelty of
the Corcy-
reans;

Pretending much regret that persons in whom they once had so tender a concern, should share the common calamity, they exhorted them, by all possible means, to contrive their escape, and offered to provide them with a bark for that purpose. The known cruelty of Eurymedon made the artifice succeed. The bark was already launched from the island; the terms of the capitulation were thus infringed; the deluded victims were apprehended in the very act of departure, seized, bound, and delivered into the hands of their inexorable enemies.

The Athenian commanders, Eurymedon and Sophocles, favoured the deceit, because as they were themselves obliged to proceed towards Sicily, they envied the honour that would accrue to their successors in conducting the captives to Athens. To gratify this meanness of soul without example, they permitted barbarities beyond belief.

and of the
Athenian
command-
ers, Eury-
medon and
Sophocles.

The unhappy prisoners were first confined in a dungeon. Dragged successively from thence, in parties of twenty at a time, they were compelled to pass in pairs, their hands tied behind their backs, between two ranks of their enemies, armed with whips, prongs, and every instrument of licentious and disgraceful torture. The wretches left in prison were long ignorant of the ignominious cruelty inflicted on their companions; but, as soon as they learned the abominable scenes transacted without, they refused to quit their confinement, guarded the entrance, and invited, with one consent, the Athenians, to murder them. But the Athenians wanted either humanity or firmness to commit this kind cruelty. The Corcyrean populace ventured not to force a passage from despair. They mounted the prison walls, uncovered the roof, and overwhelmed those below with stones, darts, and arrows. Those weapons were destructive to many, and furnished others with the means of destroying themselves or each other. They laid down their heads, opened their breasts, exposed their necks, mutually soliciting, in plaintive or frantic accents, the fatal

Unexam-
pled bar-
barities
committed
in Corcyra.

stroke. The whole night (for night intervened) was spent in this horrid scene; and the morning presented a spectacle too shocking for description. The obdurate hearts of the Corcyreans, were incapable of pity or remorse; but their relenting eyes could not bear the sight; and they commanded the bodies of their fellow-citizens, now breathless or expiring, to be thrown on carts, and conveyed without the walls.

The consequences of the sedition permanent.

Thus ended the sedition of Corcyra;* but its consequences were not soon to end. The contagion of that unhappy island engendered a political malady, which spread its baneful influence over Greece. The aristocratical, and still more, the popular governments of that country, had ever been liable to faction, which occasionally blazed into sedition. But this morbid tendency, congenial to the constitution of republics, thenceforth assumed a more dangerous appearance, and betrayed more alarming symptoms. In every republic, and almost in every city, the intriguing and ambitious found the ready protection of Athens, or of Sparta, according as their selfish and guilty designs were screened under the pretence of maintaining the prerogatives of the nobles, or asserting the privileges of the people. A virtuous and moderate aristocracy, an equal impartial freedom, these were the colourings which served to justify violence and varnish guilt. Sheltered by the specious coverings of fair names, the prodigal assassin delivered himself from the importunity of his creditor. The father, with unnatural cruelty, punished the licentious extravagance of his son: the son avenged by parricide, the stern severity of his father. The debates of the public assembly were decided by the sword. Not satisfied with victory men thirsted for blood. This general disorder overwhelmed laws human and divine. The ordinary course of events was reversed: sentiments lost their natural force, and words their usual meaning.† Dulness and stupidity triumphed over abilities and refinement; for while the crafty and ingenious were laying fine-spun snares

* Thucyd. p. 220—235.

† Ibid, p. 227, & seqq.

for their enemies, men of blunter minds had immediate recourse to the sword and poignard. This successful audacity was termed manly enterprise; ferocity assumed the name of courage; faction and ambition passed for patriotism and magnanimity; perfidy was called prudence; cunning, wisdom; every vice was clothed in the garb of every virtue: while justice, moderation, and candour, were branded as weakness, cowardice, meanness of soul, and indifference to the public interest. Such was the perversion of sentiment, and such the corruption of language first engendered amidst the turbulence of Grecian factions, and too faithfully imitated, as far as the soft effeminacy of modern manners will permit, by the discontented and seditious of later times.—Wretched and detestable delusions, by which wicked men deceive and ruin the public and themselves!

CHAP. XVII.

Physical Calamities conspire with the Evils of War.—Athenian Expedition into Ætolia.—Victories of Demosthenes.—He fortifies Pylus.—Blocks up the Spartans in Sphacteria.—The Spartans solicit Peace.—Artifices and Impudence of Cleon.—His unmerited Success.—Ridiculed by Aristophanes.—Athenian Conquests.—Battle of Delium.—Commutations in Thrace.—Expedition of Brasidas.—Truce for a Year.—The War renewed.—Battle of Amphipolis.—Peace of Nicias.—Discontent of the Spartan allies.

Physical calamities conspire with the evils of war. Olymp. lxxxviii. 2. A. C. 427.

It would be agreeable to diversify the dark and melancholy scenes of the Peloponnesian war, by introducing occurrences and transactions of a different and more pleasing kind. But such, unfortunately, is the settled gloom of our present subject, that the episodes commonly reflect the same colour with the principal action. The miserable period now under our review, and already distinguished by revolt and sedition, was still farther deformed by a return of the pestilence, and by repeated earthquakes. The disease carried off five thousand Athenian troops, and a great but uncertain number of other citizens. It raged, during a twelve-month, with unabating violence; many remedies were employed, but all equally ineffectual. The poison at length spent its force, and the malady disappeared by a slow and insensible progress, similar to that observed in the Levant, and other parts of the world, which are still liable to be visited by this dreadful calamity.* The earthquakes alarmed Attica and Bœotia,

* Voyage de Tournefort, vol. ii. Discourse on the Plague, in the Phil. Trans. vol. lxiv.

but proved most destructive in the neighbouring isles. The dreadful concussions of the land were accompanied, or perhaps produced, by a violent agitation of the sea. The reflux of the waves overwhelmed the flourishing city of Orobia, on the western coast of Eubœa. Similar disasters happened in the small islands of Atalanta and Peperathus. Nor did these alarming events terminate the afflictions of the Greeks; for Nature, as if she had delighted to produce at one period every thing most awful, poured forth a torrent of fire from Mount *Ætna*, which demolished the industrious labours of the Cataneans. A dreadful eruption had happened fifty years before this period; and the present was the third and most memorable, by which Sicily had been agitated and inflamed, since the coasts of that island were adorned by Grecian colonies.*

If the Peloponnesian war had not been carried on with an animosity unexampled and unimitated in every age but the present, the long sufferings of the contending parties would have disposed them eagerly to desire the blessings of tranquillity. But such virulent passions rankled in Athens and Sparta, that while calamities were equally balanced, and the capitals of both republics were secure, no combination of adverse circumstances seemed sufficient to determine either side to purchase peace by the smallest diminution of honour. Yet to this necessity, Sparta in the following year was reduced by a train of events, equally sudden and singular. Demosthenes, a general of merit and enterprise, commanded the Athenian forces at Naupactus. This town, as related above, had been bestowed on the unfortunate Messenians; by whose assistance, together with that of the Athenian allies in Acarnania, Cephallenia, and Zacynthus, Demosthenes undertook to reduce the hostile provinces of *Ætolia*, *Ambracia*, and *Leucadia*. But the operations necessary for this purpose were obstructed by the jealousies and dissension which prevailed among the con-

Olymp.
lxxxviii. 3.
A. C. 426.

Expedition
of Demos-
thenes to
Ætolia.
Olymp.
lxxxviii. 4.
A. C. 425.

* Thucyd. p. 250.

federates; each state insisting, that the whole force of the war should be immediately directed against its particular enemies.

Misunder-
standing
among the
Athenian
allies.

The allied army, thus distracted by contrariety, and weakened by defection, performed nothing decisive against Leucadia or Ambracia. In Ætolia they were extremely unfortunate. The Messenians, who were continually harassed by the natives of that barbarous province, persuaded Demosthenes that it would be easy to overrun their country, before the inhabitants, who lived in scattered villages, widely separated from each other, could collect their force, or attempt resistance. In pursuance of this advice, Demosthenes entered Ætolia, took and plundered the towns, and drove the inhabitants before him. During several days he marched unresisted; but having proceeded to Ægittium, the principal, or rather only city in the province, he found that his design had by no means escaped the notice of the enemy. Ægittium is situate among lofty mountains, and about ten miles distant from the Corinthian gulf. Among these intricate and almost inaccessible heights, the flower of the Ætolian nation was posted. Even the most distant tribes had come up, before the confederate army entered their borders.

Singular
mode of
battle.

Ægittium was stormed; but the inhabitants escaped to their countrymen concealed among the mountains. While the Athenians and their allies pursued them, the Ætolians rushed in separate bodies, from different eminences, and checked the pursuers with their darts and javelins. Having discharged their missile weapons, they retired, being light-armed, and incapable of resisting the impression of pikemen. New detachments continually poured forth from the mountains, and in all directions annoyed the confederates. The latter lost no ground, as long as their archers had darts, and were able to use them. But when the greatest part of their light troops were wounded or slain, the heavy-armed men began to give way. They still, however, maintained their order; and the battle long continued, in al-

ternate pursuits and retreats, the Ætolians always flying before the enemy as soon as they had discharged their javelins. But at length the confederates were exhausted by so many repeated charges, and totally defeated by opponents who durst not wait their approach.

Their conductors through this intricate country had all perished. They mistook their road to the sea. The enemy were light-armed and in their own territories. The pursuit, therefore, was unusually destructive. Many fell into caverns, or tumbled headlong from precipices. A large party wandered into an impervious wood, which being set on fire by the enemy, consumed them in its flames. A miserable remnant returned to Naupactus afflicted by the loss of their companions, and highly mortified at being defeated by Barbarians, alike ignorant of the rules of war, and the laws of civil society, who spoke an unknown dialect, and fed on raw flesh.*

Unfortunate issue of the expedition.

This disaster deterred Demosthenes from returning to Athens, till fortune gave him an opportunity to retrieve the honour of his arms. The Ætolians and Ambraciots, the most formidable enemies of the republic on that western coast of Greece, solicited and obtained assistance from Lacedæmon and Corinth, vigorously attacked the towns of Naupactus and Amphilochian Argos, and threatened to reduce the whole province of Acarnania, in which the latter was situated. The vigilance and activity of Demosthenes not only saved these important cities, but obtained the most signal advantages over the assailants. With profound military skill he divided the strength of the enemy, and, by a well-conducted stratagem, totally defeated the Ambraciots among the heights of Idomené. A strong detachment of Ambraciots had advanced the preceding day to Olpæ, a place fortified by the Acarnanians, and the seat of their courts of justice. Demosthenes obliged this detachment to retreat with

Demosthenes defends Naupactus, &c.

Defeats the Ætolians and Ambraciots.

* Thucyd. p. 237, & seqq.

considerable loss, and intercepted its return homeward. Meanwhile the collected force of the Ambraciots marched to its support, being totally unacquainted with its misfortune. Apprised of this design, Demosthenes beset the passes, and seized the most advantageous posts on their route. With the remainder of his force he advanced to attack them in front. They had already proceeded to Idomené, and encamped on the lowest ridge of that mountain.*

Demosthenes placed his Messenians in the van, Surprises their camp. and commanded them, as they marched along, to discourse in their Doric dialect. This circumstance, as the morning was yet in its dawn, effectually prevented the advanced guards from suspecting them to be enemies. Demosthenes then rushed forward with the Messenians and Acarnanians. The Ambraciots were yet in their beds. The camp was no sooner assaulted than the rout began. Many were slain on the spot; the rest fled amain; but the passes were beset, and the pursuers light-armed. Some ran to the sea, and beheld a new object of terror, a line of Athenian ships then cruising on the coast. Amidst this complication of calamities they plunged into the water, and swam to the hostile squadron, choosing to be destroyed rather by the Athenians, than by the enemies from whom they had just separated.

Consternation of an Ambracian herald.

On the following day, the victors who remained at Idomené, stripping the dead, and erecting their arms into a trophy, were addressed by a herald sent on the part of the detachment who had so much suffered in its retreat from Olpæ. This herald knew nothing of the fresh disaster that had befallen his countrymen. Observing the arms of the Ambraciots, he was astonished at their number. The victors perceiving his surprise, asked him, before he explained his commission, "What he judged to be the amount of the slain?" "Not more than two hundred," replied the herald. The inquirer then said, "It should seem

* Thucyd. p. 244, & seqq.

otherwise, for there are the arms of more than a thousand men." The herald rejoined, "They cannot then belong to our party." The other replied, "They must, if you fought yesterday at Idomené." "We fought no where yesterday; we suffered the day before, in our retreat from Olpæ." "But *we* fought yesterday against these Ambraciots, who were marching to your relief." When the herald heard this, he uttered a deep groan, and departed abruptly, without further explaining his commission.*

These important successes enabled Demosthenes to return with honour to Athens. The term of his military command had expired; but his mind could not brook inactivity. He therefore solicited permission to accompany, as a volunteer, the armament which sailed to Corcyra, the success of which has already been related, with leave to employ the Messenians, whom he carried along with him, on the coast of Peloponnesus, should any opportunity occur there, for promoting the public service. While the fleet slowly coasted along the southern shores of that peninsula, the Messenians viewed, with mingled joy and sorrow, the long lost, but still beloved, seats of their ancestors. They regretted, in particular, the decay of ancient Pylus, the royal residence of their admired Nestor, whose youth had been adorned by valour, and his age renowned for wisdom. Their immortal resentment against Sparta was inflamed by beholding the ruins of Messené. A thousand ideas and sentiments, which time had nearly obliterated, revived at the sight of their native shores.

Demosthenes sails to the Peloponnesus. Olymp. lxxxviii. 4. A. C. 425.

Emotions of the Messenians at the sight of their native shores.

When the tumult of their emotions subsided, they explained their feelings to Demosthenes, and to each other. He suggested, or at least warmly approved, the design of landing, and rebuilding Pylus, which had been abandoned by the Spartans, though it enjoyed a convenient harbour, and was strongly fortified by

The Athenians and Messenians fortify Pylus.

* Thucyd. p. 244, & seqq.

nature. Demosthenes proposed this measure to Eurymedon and Sophocles, who answered him with the insolence congenial to their character, "That there were many barren capes on the coast of Peloponnesus, which *those* might fortify who wished to entail an useless expense on their country." He next applied to the several captains of the fleet, and even to the inferior officers, but without better success, although he assured them that the place abounded in wood and stone, with which a wall, sufficient for defence, might speedily be completed. He had desisted from farther entreaties, when a fortunate storm drove the whole fleet towards the Pylian harbour. This circumstance enabled him to renew his instances with greater force, alleging that the events of fortune confirmed the expediency of the undertaking. At length the sailors and soldiers, weary of idleness (for the weather prevented them from putting to sea), began the work of their own accord, and carried it on with such vigour and activity, that in six days the place was strongly fortified on every side.* The Athenian fleet then proceeded to Corcyra, Demosthenes retaining only five ships to guard this new acquisition.

The Spartans attempt to dislodge them.

The Spartans were no sooner informed of this daring measure, than they withdrew their army from its annual incursion into Attica, and recalled their fleet from Corcyra. The citizens, residing at home, immediately flew to arms, and marched towards Pylus, which was only fifty miles distant from their capital. They found the new fortress so well prepared for defence, that nothing could be undertaken against it with any prospect of success, until their whole forces had assembled. This occasioned but a short delay; after which Pylus was vigorously assaulted by sea and land. The walls were weakest towards the harbour; the entrance of which, however, was so narrow, that only two ships could sail into it abreast. Here the attack was most furious, and the resistance most obstinate.

* Thucyd. p. 256, & seqq.

Demosthenes encouraged his troops by his voice and arm. The gallant Brasidas, a man destined to act such an illustrious part in the following scenes of the war, called out to the Lacedæmonian pilots to drive against the beach; and exhorted them, by the destruction of their ships, to save the honour of their country. He farther recommended this boldness by his example, but in performing it, received a wound which rendered him insensible. His body dropped into the sea, seemingly deprived of life, but was recovered by the affectionate zeal of his attendants. When his senses returned, he perceived the loss of his shield, a matter highly punishable by the Spartan laws, if the shield of Brasidas had not been lost with more glory than ever shield was defended.*

Gallantry of
Brasidas.

During three days, Demosthenes, with very unequal strength, resisted the enemy; when the approach of the Athenian fleet from Corcyra, which he had apprised of his danger, terminated the incredible labours of his exhausted garrison. A naval engagement ensued, in which the Lacedæmonians were defeated. But neither this defeat, nor the loss of five ships, nor the total dispersion of their fleet, nor the unexpected relief of Pylus, gave them so much uneasiness, as an event principally occasioned by their own imprudence. The island Sphacteria, scarce two miles in circumference, barren, woody, and uninhabited, lies before the harbour of Pylus. In this island the Spartans had posted four hundred and twenty heavy armed men, with a much greater proportion of Helots, not reflecting that the Athenians, as soon as they had resumed the command of the neighbouring sea, must have these forces at their devotion. This circumstance occurred not to the Spartans till after their defeat; and then affected them the more deeply, because the troops blocked up in the island belonged to the first families of the republic.

About four
hundred
Spartans
blocked up
in Sphac-
teria.

* Thucyd. p. 258.

Consternation in Sparta.

Advice of this misfortune was immediately sent to the capital. The annual magistrates, attended by a deputation of the senate, hastened to examine matters on the spot. The evil appeared to be incapable of remedy; and of such importance was this body of Spartans to the community, that all present agreed in the necessity of soliciting a truce, until ambassadors were sent to Athens to treat of a general peace. The Athenians granted a suspension of hostilities, on condition that the Spartans, as a pledge of their sincerity, surrendered their whole fleet (consisting of about sixty vessels) into the harbour of Pylus. Even this mortifying proposal was accepted. Twenty days were consumed in the embassy; during which time the troops intercepted in Sphacteria were supplied with a stated proportion of meal, meat, and wine,* that of the freemen amounting to double the quantity allowed to the slaves.

The Spartans solicit peace.

When the Spartan ambassadors were admitted to an audience at Athens, they artfully apologized for the intended length of their discourses. In all their transactions with the Greeks, they had hitherto affected the dignified brevity† inspired by conscious pre-eminence: "Yet on the present occasion, they allowed that it was necessary to explain, copiously and clearly, the advantages which would result to all Greece, and particularly to Athens herself, if the latter accepted the treaty and alliance, the free gifts of unfeigned friendship, spontaneously offered by Sparta. They pretended not to conceal or extenuate the greatness of their misfortune; but the Athenians ought also to remember the vicissitudes of war. It was full time to embrace a hearty reconciliation, and to terminate the calamities of their com-

* Thucydides does not ascertain the quantity of meat. He says, two chænixes of meal, and two cotyls of wine; that is, two pints of meal, and one pint of wine, English measure, a very small allowance; but the Athenians were afraid lest the besieged might hoard their provisions, if allowed more for daily support; which, if the negotiation failed, might enable them long to hold out the place.

† Imperatoria brevitās. TACITUS.

mon country. Hitherto the war had been carried on with more emulation than hatred; neither party had been reduced to extremity, nor had incurable evil been yet inflicted or suffered. Terms of agreement, if accepted in the moment of victory, would redound to the glory of Athens; if rejected, would ascertain who were the real authors of the war, and to whom the public calamities ought thenceforth to be imputed; since it was well known, that if Athens and Sparta were unanimous, no power in Greece would venture to dispute their commands.”*

The meek spirit of this discourse only discovered to the Athenians the full extent of their good fortune, of which they determined completely to avail themselves. Instigated by the violence of Cleon, they answered the ambassadors with great haughtiness; demanding, as preliminaries to the treaty, that the Spartans in Sphacteria should be sent to Athens; and that several places of great importance, belonging to the Spartans or their allies, should be delivered into their hands. These lofty pretensions, which were by no means justified by military success, appeared totally inadmissible to the ambassadors, who returned in disgust to the Spartan camp.

Arrogant
demands of
the Athe-
nians.

Nothing, it was evident, could be expected from the moderation of Athens; but it was expected from her justice, that she would restore the fleet, which had been surrendered as a pledge of the treaty. Even this was, on various pretences, denied.† Both parties, therefore prepared for hostilities; the Athenians to maintain their arrogance, the Spartans to chastise it.

The nego-
ciation
fruitless.

The former employed the operation of famine, as the readiest and least dangerous mode of reducing the soldiers of Sphacteria. The Athenian fleet,

Obstinate
defence of
Sphacteria.

* Thucyd. p. 262, & seqq.

† “The Athenians objected; ‘an incursion towards their fortress, during the suspension of hostilities,’ *καὶ ἄλλα οὐκ ἀξίολογα*,’ and other matters of little moment,” says Thucydides, with his usual impartiality, p. 266.

now greatly augmented, carefully guarded the island night and day. But notwithstanding its utmost vigilance, small vessels availed themselves of storms and darkness to throw provisions into the place; a service undertaken by slaves from the promise of liberty; and by freemen, from the prospect of great pecuniary rewards. The Athenians redoubled their diligence, and often intercepted those victuallers; but they found it more difficult to interrupt the expert divers, who plunging deep under water, dragged after them bottles of leather, filled with honey and flour. The blockade was thus fruitlessly protracted several weeks. Demosthenes was averse to attack an island difficult of access, covered with wood, destitute of roads, and defended on the side of Pylus by a natural fortification, strengthened by art. Meanwhile the Athenians began to suffer inconveniences, in their turn. Their garrison in Pylus was closely pressed by the enemy; there was but one source of fresh water, and that scanty, in the place; provisions grew scarce; the barrenness of the neighbouring coast afforded no supply: while they besieged the Spartans, they themselves experienced the hardships of a siege.

Artifices
and impu-
dence of
Cleon.

Their situation, when reported at Athens, threw the assembly into commotion: many clamoured against Demosthenes; several accused Cleon. The artful demagogue, whose opposition had chiefly prevented an advantageous peace with Sparta, affected to disbelieve the intelligence, and advised sending men of approved confidence to Pylus, in order to detect the imposture. The populace cried aloud, "that Cleon himself should undertake this commission." But the dissembler dreaded to become the dupe of his own artifice. He perceived, that if he went to Pylus, he must, at his return, either acknowledge the truth of the report, and thus be subjected to immediate shame, or fabricate false intelligence, and thus be exposed to future punishment. He therefore eluded his own proposal by declaring, "that it ill became the dignity of Athens to stoop to a formal and tedious examination; and that, whatever were the state of the armament, if the commanders acted like men, they might

take Sphacteria in a few days: that if *he* had the honour to be general, he would sail to the island with a small body of light infantry, and take it at the first onset."

These sarcastic observations were chiefly directed against Nicias, one of the generals actually present in the assembly; a man of virtuous, but timid disposition: endowed with much prudence, and little enterprise; possessed of moderate abilities, and immoderate riches; a zealous partisan of aristocracy, and an avowed enemy to Cleon, whom he regarded as the worst enemy of his country.

Character
of Nicias.

A person of this character could not be much inclined to engage in the hazardous expedition to Sphacteria. When the Athenians, with the usual licentiousness that prevailed in their assemblies, called out to Cleon, "that if the enterprise appeared so easy, it would better suit the extent of his abilities;" Nicias rose up, and immediately offered to cede to him the command. Cleon at first accepted it, thinking Nicias' proposal merely a feint; but when the latter appeared in earnest, his adversary drew back, alleging, "that Nicias, not Cleon, was general." The Athenians, with the malicious pleasantry natural to the multitude, pressed Cleon the closer, the more eagerly he receded. He was at length overcome by their importunity, but not forsaken by his impudence.* Advancing to the middle of the assembly, he declared, "that he was not afraid of the Lacedæmonians; and engaged in twenty days, to bring the Spartans as prisoners to Athens, or to die in the attempt."† This heroical language excited laughter among the multitude; the wise rejoiced in thinking, that they must obtain one of two advantages, either the destruction of a turbulent demagogue (which they rather hoped,) or the capture of the Spartans in Sphacteria.

He cedes
the com-
mand to
Cleon.

Boastful
promise of
the latter,

* Thucyd. p. 271.

† *ἢ αὐτοὺς ἀποκτείνω*, or, "kill them on the spot." A little alteration in the text will give the meaning which I preferred as most agreeable to what follows: but the other translation better suits the boastful character of Cleon.

which is
performed
by acci-
dent.
Olymp.
lxxxviii. 4.
A. C. 425.

The latter event was hastened by an accident: while some soldiers were preparing their victuals, the wood was set on fire, and long burned unperceived, till a brisk gale arising, the conflagration raged with such violence, as threatened to consume the island. This unforeseen disaster disclosed the strength and position of the Spartans; and Demosthenes was actually preparing to attack them, when Cleon, with his light armed troops, arrived in the camp. The island was invaded in the night; the advanced guards were taken or slain. At dawn, the Athenians made a descent from seventy ships. The main body of the enemy retired to the strong post opposite to Pylus, harassed in their march by showers of arrows, stones, and darts, involved in the ashes of the burnt wood, which mounting widely into the air, on all sides, intercepted their sight, and increased the gloom of battle. The Spartans, closely embodied, and presenting a dreadful front to the assailants, made good their retreat. Having occupied the destined post, they boldly defended it wherever the enemy approached, for the nature of the ground hindered it from being surrounded. The Athenians used their utmost efforts to repel and overcome them; and during the greatest part of the day, both parties obstinately persevered in their purpose, under the painful pressures of fatigue, thirst, and a burning sun. At length the Messenians, whose ardour had been signally distinguished in every part of this enterprise, discovered an unknown path leading to the eminence which defended the Lacedæmonian rear. The Spartans were thus encompassed on all sides and reduced to a similar situation to that of their illustrious countrymen who fell at Thermopylæ.

The Spar-
tans in
Sphacteria
carried pri-
soners to
Athens.

Their commanders disgraced not the country of Leonidas. Their general, Epitades, was slain. Hippagretes was dying of his wounds. Styphon, the third in command, still exhorted them to persevere. But Demosthenes and Cleon, desirous rather to carry them prisoners to Athens, than to put them to death, invited them, by the loud proclamation of a herald to

lay down their arms. The greater part dropped their shields, and waved their hands, in token of compliance. A conference followed between Demosthenes and Cleon on one side, and Styphon on the other. Styphon desired leave to send over to the Lacedæmonians on the continent for advice. Several messages passed between them; in the last of which it was said, "the Lacedæmonians permit you to consult your own interest, provided you submit to nothing base;" in consequence of which determination, they surrendered their arms and their persons. They were conducted to Athens, within the time assigned by Cleon; having held out fifty-two days after the expiration of the truce, during which time they had been so sparing of the provisions conveyed to them by the extraordinary means above mentioned, that, when the place was taken, they had still something in reserve.*

The Athenians withdrew their fleet, leaving a strong garrison in Pylus, which was soon reinforced by an enterprising body of Messenians from Naupactus. The Messenians, though possessed of no more than one barren cape on their native and once happy coast, resumed their inveterate hatred against Sparta, whose territories they continually infested by incursions, or harassed by alarms. This species of war, destructive in itself, was rendered still more dangerous by the revolts of the Helots, attracted by every motive of affection towards their ancient kinsmen, and animated by every principle of resentment against their tyrannical masters. Meanwhile the Athenian fleet renewed and multiplied its ravages on the coast of Peloponnesus. Reduced to extremity by such proceedings, the Spartans sent to Athens repeated overtures of accommodation. But the good fortune of the Athenians only fomented their ambition. At the instigation of Cleon, they dismissed the Spartan ambassadors more insolently than ever.† Such was their deference to the opinion of this arrogant demagogue; at the same time that, with the most inconsistent levity, they

Humiliation
of Sparta.

Authority
and insolence of
Cleon.

* Thucyd. p. 271—279.

† Aristoph. Equit. v. 794.

listened with pleasure to the plays of Aristophanes, which lashed the character and administration of Cleon with the boldest severity of satire, sharpened by the edge of the most poignant ridicule.

Exposed by
Aristo-
phanes. The taking of Pylus, the triumphant return of Cleon, a notorious coward transformed by the caprice of fortune into a brave and successful commander, were topics well suiting the comic vein of Aristophanes. The imperious demagogue had deserved the personal resentment of the poet, by denying the legitimacy of his birth,* and thereby contesting his title to vote in the assembly. On former occasions, Aristophanes had stigmatised the incapacity and insolence of Cleon, together with his perfidious selfishness in embroiling the affairs of the republic. In the comedy† first represented in the seventh year of the war, he attacks him in the moment of victory, when fortune had rendered him the idol of a licentious multitude, when no comedian was so daring as to play his character, and no painter so bold as to design his mask.‡

Account of
his comedy,
entitled,
the Knights. Aristophanes, therefore, appeared for the first time on the stage, only disguising his own face, the better to represent the part of Cleon. In this ludicrous piece, which seems to have been celebrated even beyond its merit, the people of Athens are described under the allegory of a capricious old dotard, whose credulity, abused by a malicious slave lately admitted into his house, persecutes and torments his faithful old servants. Demosthenes bitterly complains, that, intending to gratify the palate of the old man, he had brought a delicate morsel from Pylus; but that it had been stolen by Cleon, and by him served up to their common master. After lamenting, with his companion Nicias, the hardships of their condition, they hold counsel together,

* Vit. anonym. Aristoph.

† The *εἰπίεις*.

‡ Ἐπο τοῦ δεοῦς γὰρ αὐτὸν οὐδεὶς ἤθελε

τῶν σκευοποιῶν εἰκασαί. Equites, v. 231.

§ Νεοητὸν κακόν, "the new-bought mischief."

and contrive various expedients for putting an end to their common calamities. The desponding Nicias proposes drinking bull's blood, after the example of Themistocles; Demosthenes, with more courage, advises a hearty draught of wine. Finding Cleon asleep, they seize the opportunity not only to purloin this liquor, but to rifle his pockets, in which they discover some ancient oracles, typically representing the succession of Athenian magistrates. Towards the end of the prophecy, it was said, that the dragon should overcome the devouring vulture. The rapacious avarice of Cleon corresponded to the type of the vulture; and the dragon darkly shadowed out Agoracritus, an eminent maker of puddings and sausages, the shape and contents of which alluded to the figure and food of that terrible serpent. Nicias and Demosthenes hail this favourite of fortune, as the destined master of the republic. Agoracritus alleges in vain, that he is totally unacquainted with political affairs, ignorant of every liberal art, and has hardly learned to read. They reply, by announcing to him the oracle, and by proving that his pretended imperfections better qualified him to conduct the government of Athens. This office required none of the talents, the want of which he lamented. He matched Cleon in impudence, and surpassed him in strength of lungs. His profession had taught him to squeeze, to amass, to mix, to bruise, and to embroil; and long experience had rendered him accomplished in all the frauds and chicane of the market.* He might therefore boldly enter the lists with Cleon, being assured of assistance from the whole body of Athenian knights.† Agoracritus, thus encouraged, prepares for encountering his adversary. The contest, long doubtful, is maintained in a style of the lowest buffoonery, always ludicrous, often indecent. The old dotard, or rather the Athenians whom he represents, finally acknowledge their

* The same word in Greek denotes the market and the forum. Indeed the same place usually served for both.

† The *ἵππεις*, or Equites, the second rank of citizens at Athens, who detested Cleon, and from whom the play takes its name.

past errors ; and regret being so long deceived by an upstart slave, through whose obstinacy in continuing the war, they had been cooped up within the walls of an unwholesome city, and hindered from enjoying their beautiful fields and happy rural amusements. Agoracritus seizes this favourable moment to produce two ancient treaties with the Lacedæmonians, personified by two beautiful women, whom he had found closely mewed up in the house of Cleon. Of these females the old Athenian becomes suddenly enamoured, and they retire together to the country.

The Athenians take Cythera, Olymp. lxxxix. 1. A. C. 424.

The people of Athens permitted, and even approved, the licentious boldness of Aristophanes ; but neither the strength of reason, nor the sharpness of satire, could check the dangerous career of their ambition. The war was rendered popular by success ; they prepared for carrying it on with redoubled vigour. The first operations of the ensuing summer gratified their utmost hopes. The principal division of the fleet, conducted by the prudence of Nicias, conquered the fertile and populous island of Cythera, stretching from the southern promontory of Laconia towards the Cretan sea, and long enriched by the commerce of Egypt and Libya. The Lacedæmonian garrison, as well as the Spartan magistrates in the island, surrendered prisoners of war. The more dangerous part of the inhabitants were removed to the Athenian isles ; the remainder were subjected to an annual tribute, amounting in value to eight hundred pounds sterling ; an Athenian garrison took possession of the fortress.

Reduce Nicæa, and ravage Peloponnesus.

Soon after this conquest, the arms of Demosthenes and Hippocrates reduced the town of Nicæa, the principal sea-port of the Megareans ; and the Athenian fleet ravaged with impunity several maritime cities on the eastern coast of Peloponnesus. Thyrea was condemned to a harder fate. This city, together with the surrounding district, had been granted, by the compassion of Sparta, to the miserable natives of Ægina, who (as above-mentioned) had been driven from their once powerful island

by the cruelty of Athens. The same cruelty still continued to pursue them. Their newly raised walls were taken by assault; their houses burned; and the inhabitants, without distinction, put to the sword.

Hitherto all the enterprises of the Athenians were crowned with success. Fortune first deserted them in Bœotia. During several months their generals, Demosthenes and Hippocrates, availing themselves of the political factions of that country, had been carrying on secret intrigues with Chæronæ, Siphæ, and Orchomenus, places abounding in declared partisans of democracy, and eternally hostile to the ambition of Thebes. The insurgents had agreed to take arms, in order to betray the western parts of Bœotia to Demosthenes, who sailed with forty galleys from Naupactus; while Hippocrates, at the head of seven thousand heavy armed Athenians, and a much greater proportion of light armed auxiliaries, invaded the eastern frontier of that province. It was expected, that before the Thebans could bring a sufficient force into the field, the invaders and insurgents, advancing from opposite extremities of the country, might unite in the centre, and perhaps subdue Thebes itself, the most powerful, as well as most zealous, ally of Sparta.

Endeavour
to produce
a revolution
in Bœotia.

This plan, though concerted with much ability, was found too complicated for execution. Demosthenes steered towards Siphæ, before his coadjutor was ready to take the field; some mistake, it is said, having happened about the time appointed for action; and the whole contrivance was betrayed by Nicomachus, a Phochian, to the Spartans, and by them communicated to the Bœotians. The cities which meditated revolt were thus secured, before Demosthenes appeared at Siphæ, and before Hippocrates had even marched from Attica.

Their plan
too compli-
cated for
execution.

The latter at length entered the eastern frontier of Bœotia; and, as the principal design had miscarried, contented himself with taking and fortifying Delium, a place sacred to Apollo. Having garrisoned this post, he prepared for returning

They are
defeated in
the battle
of Delium.
Olymp.
lxxxix. 1.
A. C. 424.

home. But while his army still lay in the neighbourhood of Delium, the Thebans, encouraged by Pagondas, a brave and skilful leader, marched with great rapidity from Tanagra, in order to intercept his retreat. Their forces amounted to eighteen thousand; the Athenians were little less numerous. An engagement ensued, which national emulation rendered bloody and obstinate. Before the battle, Pagondas had detached a small squadron of horse, with orders to advance suddenly, as soon as the action had commenced. This stratagem was decisive. The Athenians, terrified at the sight of a reinforcement, which their fears magnified into a new army, were thrown into disorder, and put to flight. Approaching darkness saved them from total destruction. They escaped disgracefully into Attica, after leaving in the field of battle a thousand pikemen, with their commander Hippocrates.

The Thebans take Delium by means of a machine invented for that purpose.

The victorious army immediately formed the siege of Delium, which was taken by means of an engine first contrived for that purpose. Several parts of the fortification, which had been raised in great haste, consisted chiefly of wood. The besiegers therefore, joining together a number of large beams, formed a huge mast, perforated in the middle; to one of its extremities they appended a prodigious mass of pitch and sulphur; and to the other a bellows, which, when this unusual instrument of destruction was raised above the wooden rampart, immediately threw the whole into flames. The Athenian garrison, diminished by death or desertion to two hundred men, surrendered prisoners of war.*

Commo-
tions in
Thrace.

The Athenians had scarcely time to lament their losses in Bœotia, when they received intelligence of events in another quarter, equally unexpected, but far more distressful. These events are the more remarkable, because they naturally arose out of the preceding prosperity of Athens, and the past misfortunes of Sparta. The uninterrupted train of success which attended the arms of

* Thucyd. p. 304—320.

Nicias and Demosthenes in the eighth year of the war, alarmed the citizens of Olynthus and other places of the Chalcidicé, which having embraced the earliest opportunity of revolting from the Athenians, justly dreaded the vengeance of an incensed and victorious people. Every southerly wind threatened them with the approach of an Athenian fleet. Their apprehensions were not less painful on the side of Thessaly. The slightest movement in that country terrified them with the apprehensions of an Athenian army, which, victorious in the south, should advance to punish its northern enemies. But as none of these fearful suspicions were realized, the inhabitants of the Chalcidicé gradually resumed courage, put their towns in a posture of defence, and craved assistance from their Peloponnesian allies. At the same time Perdiccas, king of Macedonia, who regarded the Athenians as his ancient and natural enemies, and the rapacious invaders of his coast, sent money into the south of Greece, for the purpose of hiring soldiers, whom he intended to employ in resisting the encroachments of that ambitious people, as well as in subduing the Elymeans, Lyncestæ, and other barbarous tribes, not yet incorporated in the Macedonian kingdom.

Such were the enemies, whose activity the good fortune of Athens had roused; while the calamities of Sparta prompted her to supply the reinforcement of troops, which both Perdiccas and the Chalcidians demanded. During the seventh and eighth years of the war, that republic fatally experienced the truth of Pericles' maxim, "that those who commanded the sea, may also become masters at land." The Athenian fleets domineered over the coast of Peloponnesus. It was impossible to foresee what places would be the next objects of their continual descents. The maritime parts were successively laid waste, and finally abandoned by the inhabitants, who found resistance ineffectual and useless. These misfortunes were increased by the frequent desertion of the Helots to the neighbouring garrisons in Pylus and Cythera, and by the dread of a general insurrection among those numerous and unhappy victims of Spartan tyran-

Fomented
by the Spar-
tans.

ny. To prevent this evil, the Spartans had recourse to such expedients as excite astonishment and horror. They commanded the Helots to choose two thousand of their bravest and most meritorious youths, who, by the general consent of their companions, deserved the crown of liberty; and when invested with this perfidious ornament, the unsuspecting freemen had paraded the streets, and sacrificed in the temples, exulting in their recent emancipation, these new members of the community gradually disappeared from the sight of men, nor was it ever known by what means they had been destroyed. But the veil of mystery, which concealed that dark and bloody stratagem, prevented neither the resentment of the slaves, nor the just suspicion of their masters. The latter were eager to embrace any measure that might deliver their country from its dangerous domestic foes. With much satisfaction, therefore, they sent seven hundred Helots to the standard of Brasidas, whose merit had recommended him to Perdiccas and the Chalcidians, as the general best qualified to manage the Macedonian war. About a thousand soldiers were levied in the neighbouring cities of Peloponnesus. Several Spartans cheerfully accompanied a leader whom they admired. With this inconsiderable force Brasidas, towards the beginning of autumn, undertook an expedition highly important in its consequences, conducted with bold enterprise and consummate prudence.*

Brasidas' expedition to Thrace: Olymp. lxxxix. 1. A. C. 424.

Having traversed the friendly countries of Bœotia, and Phocis, he arrived at the foot of mount Oëta, and penetrated through the narrow defiles confined between that steep and woody range of hills, and the boisterous waves of the Malian gulf. The sight of Thermopylæ animated the enthusiasm of the Spartans, and encouraged them to force their way through the hostile plains of Thessaly; a country actually torn by domestic discord but always friendly to the Athenians. The celerity of Brasidas anticipated the slow opposition of a divided

* Thucyd. p. 304.

enemy. Having reached the Macedonian town of Diam, he joined forces with Perdiccas, who proposed directing the first operations of the combined army against Arribæus, the king or leader of the barbarous Lyncestæ. But even this Barbarian knew the valour of the Spartans, and the equity of Brasidas. To the decision of the Grecian general he offered to submit the differences between Perdiccas and himself, and engaged to abide by the award, however unfavourable to his interest. The Spartan listened to a proposal extremely reasonable in itself, though altogether inconsistent with the ambitious views of Perdiccas, who disdained to accept as a judge the man whom he paid as an auxiliary. Brasidas, on the other hand, declined in firm but decent terms, to employ his valour against those who implored his justice. The generals thus separated in mutual disgust; and Perdiccas thenceforth reduced his contribution of subsidy from a moiety to a third; but even that was extorted from his fears, not bestowed by his munificence.

Brasidas hastened to join the Chalcidians, by whom he was received with a degree of joy suitable to the impatience with which he had been expected. Amidst the general defection of their neighbours, the towns of Acanthus and Stagirus still maintained their allegiance to Athens. Brasidas appeared before the gates of Acanthus, while the peaceful inhabitants were preparing for the labours of a vintage. He sent a messenger, craving leave to enter the place, and to address the assembly. The Acanthians were divided in opinion; but the majority, fearing to expose their ripe fields and vineyards to the resentment of his army, agreed to admit the general alone and unattended, and impartially to weigh whatever he proposed for their deliberation. Brasidas, though a Spartan, was an able speaker. He observed to the Acanthians convened in full assembly, "That, in compliance with the generous resolution of Sparta, he had undertaken, and finally accomplished, a long and dangerous march, to deliver them from the tyranny of Athenian magistrates and garrisons, and to restore them,

His transactions with the Acanthians.

what the common oppressors of Greece had so long withheld, the independent government of their own equitable laws. This was the object, which, amidst all the calamities of war, the Spartans had ever kept in view; this was the system, which, before his departure from home, the principal magistrates had sworn unanimously to maintain. *That* freedom and independence, which formed the domestic happiness of Sparta, his countrymen were ambitious to communicate to all their allies. But if the Acanthians refused to share the general benefit, they must not complain of experiencing the unhappy effects of their obstinacy. The arms of Sparta would compel those whom her arguments had failed to persuade. Nor could this be blamed as injustice; first, because the resources with which the Acanthians furnished Athens, under the ignominious name of tribute, served to rivet the chains of Greece: and secondly, because the example of a people, so wealthy and flourishing, and long renowned for their penetration and sagacity, might influence the resolutions of neighbouring states, and deter them from concurring with the measures necessary to promote the public welfare."

His merit
and success.

This judicious discourse, enforced by the terror of the Spartan army, engaged the Acanthians to accept the friendship of Brasidas. Stagirus, another city on the Strymonic gulf, readily followed the example, and opened its gates to the deliverer. During the ensuing winter, the measures of the Spartan general were conducted with equal ability and enterprise. His successful operations against the inland towns facilitated the surrender of such places, as, by their maritime or insular situation, were most exposed to the vengeance of Athens, and therefore most averse to revolt. His moderate use of victory ensured the good-will of the vanquished. The various parts of a plan, thus artfully combined, mutually assisted each other; the success of one undertaking contributed to that of the next which followed it; and, at length, without any considerable miscarriage, he had rendered himself master of most places in the peninsulas of Acta, Sithonia, and Palléné.

The loss of Amphipolis was that which most deeply afflicted the Athenians ; a rich and populous city, beautifully situate on a small but well cultivated island, surrounded by the river Strymon, the banks of which supplied excellent timber, and other materials of naval strength. By possessing this town, the Spartans now commanded both branches of the river, and might thus pass, without interruption, to the Athenian colonies, or subjects on the coast of Thrace ; seize, or plunder, the gold mines opposite to the isle of Thasos, and ravage the fertile fields of the Thracian Chersonesus. The conquest of a place so essential to the enemy, had exercised the courage, the eloquence, and the dexterity of Brasidas. He formed a conspiracy with the malecontents in the place, skilfully disposed his army before the walls, harangued the assembly of the people. A most seasonable promptitude distinguished all his measures ; yet the Athenian Eucleus, who commanded the garrison, found time to send a vessel to Thasos, requesting immediate and effectual relief.

Amphipolis
revolts to
Brasidas,

The Athenians had committed the government of that island, as well as the direction of the mines on the opposite continent to the celebrated historian of a war, in which he was a meritorious, though unfortunate, actor. Without a moment's delay, Thucydides put to sea with seven galleys, and arrived in the mouth of the Strymon the same day on which his assistance had been demanded. But it was already too late to save Amphipolis.* The Spartan general, who had exact information of all the measures of the besieged, well knew the importance of anticipating the arrival of Thucydides, whose name was highly respected by the Greek colonies in Thrace, and whose influence was considerable among the native Barbarians. Brasidas, therefore, proposed such a capitulation to the Amphipolitans as it seemed imprudent to refuse. They were to be released from the tribute which they had hitherto paid the Athenians ; to enjoy the utmost degree of political indepen-

notwith-
standing
the activity
of Thucydi-
des the his-
torian ;

* Thucydid. p. 322.

dence, not inconsistent with the alliance of Sparta ; even the Athenian garrison, if they continued in the place, were to be entitled to all the rights of citizens ; and such persons as chose to leave it, were granted a reasonable time to remove their families and their property. The last condition which saves Eion. was embraced by the Athenians, and their more determined partisans. They retired to the neighbouring town of Eion, situate near the sea, on the northern branch of the Strymon ; a place secured against every hostile assault by the skill and activity of Thucydides.

Brasidas' success occasions clamours and impeachments in Athens.

Towards the end of the winter, the full extent of Brasidas' success was made known at Athens. The assembly was in commotion ; and the populace were the more enraged at their losses, as it now appeared so easy to have prevented them, either by guarding the narrow defiles which led to their

Macedonian possessions, or by sending their fleet with a seasonable reinforcement to their feeble garrisons in those parts. Their own neglect had occasioned the public disgrace ; but with the usual injustice and absurdity accompanying popular discontents, they exculpated themselves, and banished their generals. Thucydides was involved in this cruel sentence. An armament was sent to Macedon ; and new commanders were named to oppose Brasidas.

The Spartans avail themselves of it to obtain a truce for a year.

But the designs of that commander, who had begun to build vessels on the Strymon, and aspired at nothing less than succeeding to the authority, without exercising the oppression, of Athens, over those extensive shores were more successfully opposed by the envy of the Spartan magistrates. The pride of the nobles was wounded by the glory of an expedition, in which they had no share ; and their selfishness, while it obstinately prevented the supplies necessary to complete the plan of Brasidas, was eager to reap the profit of his past success. The restoration of their kinsmen taken at Sphacteria formed the object of their fondest wish ; and they expected that the Athenians might listen to a proposal for that purpose, in order

to recover the places which they had lost, and to check the fortunate career of a prudent and enterprising general. The Athenians readily entered into these views: it was determined that matters of such importance should be discussed with leisure and impartiality; a truce was therefore agreed on for a year between the contending republics.

This transaction was concluded in the ninth summer of the war. It was totally unexpected by Brasidas, who received the voluntary submission of Scioné and Menda, two places of considerable importance in the peninsula of Palléné; of the former, indeed, before he was acquainted with the suspension of hostilities; but of the latter, even after he was apprised of that treaty.

Olymp.
lxxxix. 2.
A. C. 423.

While the active valour of Brasidas prevented the confirmation of peace, the conscious worthlessness of Cleon promoted the renewal, or rather the continuance, of war. The glory of Athens was the perpetual theme of his discourse. He exhorted his countrymen to punish the perfidy of Sparta, in abetting the insolent revolt of Menda and Scioné; and to employ his own skill and bravery, which had been so successfully exerted on the coast of Peloponnesus, to repair their declining fortune in Macedonia. The Athenians listened to the specious advice of this turbulent declaimer, who, in the ensuing spring, sailed to the Macedonian coast with a fleet of thirty galleys, twelve hundred citizens heavy-armed, a squadron of three hundred horse, and a powerful body of light-armed auxiliaries. The surrender of Menda and Torona, whose inhabitants were treated with every excess of cruelty, encouraged him to attack Amphipolis. With this design, having collected his forces at Eion, he waited the arrival of some Macedonian troops, promised by Perdiccas, who having quarrelled with the Spartan general, deceitfully flattered the hopes of his antagonist.

The war
renewed.
Olymp.
lxxxix. 3.
A. C. 422.

The army of Cleon contained the flower of the Athenian youth, whose ardent valour disdained a precarious dependence on Barbarian aid. They accused the cowardice of their leader, which was only equalled

Battle of
Amphipolis.

by his incapacity, and lamented their own hard fate in being subjected to the authority of a man so unworthy to command them. The impatient temper of an arrogant demagogue was ill fitted to endure these seditious complaints. He hastily led his troops before the place, without previously examining the strength of the walls, the situation of the ground, the number or disposition of the enemy. Brasidas, meanwhile, had taken proper measures to avail himself of the known imprudence of his adversary. A considerable body of men had been concealed in the woody mountain Cerdylum, which overhangs Amphipolis. The greater part of the army was drawn up ready for action, at the several gates of the city. Clearidas who commanded there, had orders to rush forth at a given signal, while Brasidas in person, conducting a select band of intrepid followers, watched the first opportunity for attack. The plan, contrived with so much skill, was executed with equal dexterity. Confounded with the rapidity and precision of such an unexpected and complicated charge, the enemy fled amain, abandoning their shields, and exposing their naked backs to the swords and spears of the pursuers. The forces on either

side amounted to about three thousand; six hundred Athenians fell victims to the folly of Cleon, who, though foremost in the flight, was arrested by the hand of a Myrcinian targeteer.

His death might appease the manes of his unfortunate countrymen; but nothing could alleviate the sorrow of the victors for the loss of their admired Brasidas, who received a mortal wound while he advanced to the attack. He was conveyed alive to Amphipolis, and consoled with the result of his last victory, in which only seven men had perished on the Spartan side. The solemn magnificence of his funeral was adorned by the splendour of military honours; but what was still more honourable to Brasidas, he was sincerely lamented by the grateful tears of numerous communities, who regarded his virtues and abilities as the surest pledges of their own freedom and happiness. The citizens of Amphipolis paid an extraordinary tribute to his

memory. Having demolished every monument of their ancient worthies, they erected the statue of Brasidas in the most conspicuous square of the city, appointed annual games to be celebrated at his tomb, and sacrificed to his revered shade, as to the great protecting hero and original founder of their community.*

The battle of Amphipolis removed the principal obstacles to peace. There was not any Spartan general qualified to accomplish the designs of Brasidas. The Athenians, dejected by defeat, and humbled by disgrace, wanted the bold imposing eloquence of Cleon, to disguise their weakness, and varnish their misfortunes. With the dishearted remains of an enfeebled armament they despaired of recovering their Macedonian possessions: and the greater part returned home, well disposed for an accommodation with the enemy. These dispositions were confirmed by the pacific temper of Nicias, who had succeeded to the influence of Cleon, and who fortunately experienced in the moderation of Pleistoanax, king of Sparta, a ready coadjutor in his measures. During winter, several friendly conferences were held between the commissioners of the two republics; and towards the commencement of the ensuing spring, a treaty of peace, and soon afterwards a defensive alliance, for fifty years, was ratified by the kings and ephori of Sparta on the one side and by the archons and generals of Athens on the other. In consequence of this negotiation, which was intended to comprehend the respective allies of the contracting powers, all places and prisoners, taken in the course of the war, were to be mutually restored: the revolted cities in Macedon were specified by name: but it was regulated that the Athenians should not exact from them any larger revenue than that formerly constituted by the justice of Aristides.†

In all their transactions, the Greeks were ever prodigal of promises, but backward in perform-

Peace of
Nicias.
Olymp.
lxxxix. 4.
A. C. 421.

Dissatisfac-
tion of the

* Thucyd. p. 307.

† Thucyd. p. 354, & seqq.

Lacedæmo-
nian allies.

ance; and, amidst the continual rotation of authority, magistrates easily found excuses for violating the conditions granted by their predecessors. The known principles of republican inconstancy, ever ready to vibrate between excessive animosity and immoderate friendship, might likewise suggest a reason for converting a treaty of peace into a contract of alliance. But this measure, in the present case, was the effect of necessity. Athens and Sparta might make mutual restitution, because their respective interests required it. But no motive of interest engaged the former power to restore Nicæa to the Megareans, or the towns of Solium and Anactorium to Corinth. The Thebans, shortly before the peace, had seized the Athenian fortress of Panactum, situate on the frontier of Bœotia. They were still masters of Platæa. Elated by their signal victory at Delium, they could not be supposed willing to abandon their conquests, or even heartily inclined to peace. It was still less to be expected that the Macedonian cities should, for the conveniency of Sparta, submit to the severe yoke of Athens, from which they had recently been delivered; nor could it be hoped that even the inferior states of Peloponnesus should tamely lay down their arms, without obtaining any of those advantages with which they had been long flattered by their Spartan allies.

CHAP. XVIII.

Discontents fomented by the Corinthians.—The Argive Alliance—To which Athens accedes.—Birth and Education of Alcibiades.—His Friendship with Socrates.—His Character—and Views—which are favoured by the State of Greece.—He deceives the Spartan Ambassadors.—Renewal of the Peloponnesian War.—Battle of Mantinea.—Tumults in Argos.—Massacre of the Scioneans.—Cruel conquest of Melos.

THE voluptuous, yet turbulent citizens of Corinth, enjoy the odious distinction of renewing a war which their intrigues and animosities had first kindled. Under pretence of having taken an oath never to bandon the Macedonian cities, they declined to become parties in the general treaty of peace. The alliance between Athens and Sparta, in which it was stipulated that these contracting powers should be entitled to make such alterations in the treaty as circumstances might require, the Corinthians affected, with some reason, to consider as a conspiracy against the common liberties of Greece.* Fired with this idea, they hastened to Argos, in order to animate that republic with the same passions which rankled in their own breasts. Having roused the ambition of the *magistrates*, they artfully reminded the *people* of the glory of Agamemnon, recalled to the Argives their ancient and just pre-eminence in the Peloponnesus, and conjured them to maintain the honour of that illustrious peninsula, which had been so shamefully abandoned by the pusillanimity, or betrayed by the selfishness of Sparta.

* The clause was worded in such a manner as might naturally excite alarm; Προσθηναικαι αφελειν ὅτι αν ΑΜΦΟΙΝ του πολμου δοχη. Thucyd. i. v. p. 482.

The Argive
alliance.
Olymp.
lxxxix. 4.
A. C. 421.

The Argives wanted neither power nor inclination to assume that important office. During the Peloponnesian war, they had observed the principles of a prudent neutrality, equally favourable to their populousness and their wealth. Their protection was courted by Mantinæa, the most powerful city in Arcadia, which had recently conquered some villages in its neighbourhood, to which Sparta laid claim. The Elians, long hostile to Sparta, eagerly promoted the Argive alliance, which was farther strengthened by the speedy accession of the Macedonian cities, whose inhabitants were not more flattered by the kind zeal of Corinth, than provoked by the cruel indifference of Sparta. Thebes and Megara were equally offended at the Lacedæmonians, and equally inclined to war. But a rigid aristocracy prevailed in those states, whose ambitious magistrates, trembling for their personal authority, and that of their families, declined entering into confederacy with free democratical republics.*

To which
Athens ac-
cedes.

Olymp.
xc. 1.
A. C. 420.

But this democratical association soon acquired an accession still more important, and received into its bosom the fountain of liberty itself, even the republic of Athens. This extraordinary event happened in the year following the negotiation between Athens and Sparta. It was effected by means extremely remote from the experience of modern times; means which it is incumbent on us to explain, lest the political transactions of Greece should appear too fluctuating and capricious to afford a proper subject for history.

Birth and
education
of Alcibi-
ades.

Amidst the factious turbulence of senates and assemblies, no measure could be adopted by one party, without being condemned by another. Many Athenians disapproved the peace of Nicias;† but the general blaze of opposition was eclipsed by the splendour

* Thucyd. l. v. p. 371.

† The Greeks sometimes distinguished treaties by the names of those who made them: the peace of Cimon; the peace of Nicias; and, as we shall see hereafter, the peace of Antalcidas.

of one man, who, on this occasion, first displayed those singular but unhappy talents, which proved fatal to himself and to his country. Alcibiades had not reached his thirtieth year, the age required by the wisdom of Solon for being entitled to speak in the assembly. But every advantageous circumstance of birth and fortune, talents natural and acquired, accomplishments of mind and body, pleaded an exception in favour of this extraordinary character, which, producing at once flowers and fruit, united with the blooming vivacity and youth, the ripened wisdom of experience.* His father, the rich and generous Clinias, derived his extraction from the heroic Ajax, and had distinguished his own valour and patriotism in the glorious scenes of the Persian war. In the female line, the son of Clinias was allied to the eloquence and magnanimity of Pericles, who, as his nearest surviving kinsman, had been intrusted with the care of his minority. But the statesman who governed with undivided sway the affairs of Athens and of Greece, could not bestow much attention on this important domestic task. The tender years of Alcibiades were committed to the illiberal discipline of mercenary preceptors; his youth and inexperience were beset by the destructive adulation of servile flatterers, until the young Athenian, having begun to relish the poems of Homer, the admiration of which is congenial to every great mind, learned from thence to despise the pedantry of the one, and to detest the meanness of the other.†

From Homer, Alcibiades early imbibed that ambition for excellence which is the great lesson of the immortal bard. Having attained the verge of manhood, he readily distinguished, among the crowd of rhetoricians and sophists, the superior merit of Socrates, who rejecting all factitious and abstruse studies, confined his speculations to matters of real importance and utility; who, having never travelled into Egypt and the East in search of mysterious knowledge, reasoned with an Attic perspicuity

His early attachment to Socrates.

* Plut. & Nepos in Alcibiad.

† Plut. in Alcibiad.

and freedom; and who, being unbiassed by the system of any master, and always master of himself, thought, spoke, and acted with equal independence and dignity. An amiable and most instructive writer, the disciple and friend of Socrates, has left an admirable panegyric of the uniform temperance, the unshaken probity, the diffusive benevolence, invariably displayed in his virtuous life of seventy years.* His distinguished excellences are justly appreciated by Xenophon, a scholar worthy of his master;† but the youthful levity of Alcibiades (for youth is seldom capable of estimating the highest of all merits, the undeviating tenor of an innocent and useful life) was chiefly delighted with the splendour of particular actions. The eloquence, rather than the innocence of Socrates, excited his admiration. He was charmed with that inimitable raillery, that clear comprehensive logic, which baffled the most acute disputants of the Athenian schools;‡ that erect independence of mind, which disdained the insolence of power, the pride of wealth, and the vanity of popular fame, was well fitted to attract the congenial esteem of Alcibiades who aspired beyond the beaten paths of vulgar greatness; nor could the gallant youth be less affected by the invincible intrepidity of Socrates, when quitting the shade of speculation, and covered with the helm and cuirass, he grasped the massy spear, and justified, by his strenuous exertion in the field of battle, the useful lessons of his philosophy.||

Their mutual obligations and friendship.

Socrates in his turn (since it is easier for a wise man to correct the errors of reason than to conquer the delusions of sentiment,) was deeply affected with the beauty of Alcibiades;§ a beauty

* Xenoph. Memorabil. Socrat.

† See particularly Xenoph. Apolog. Socrat.

‡ Plato, passim.

|| Xenoph. Memorab. Socrat. pp. 449. 804. 818.

§ Vid. Xenoph. and Plato passim. Socrates often acknowledges the danger of beauty, and its power over himself; but loses no opportunity to caution his disciples against the shameful passions, and abominable vices, which flow from this fair source. Vid. Memorab. Socrat. l. ii. passim. & l. v. c. iii. Sympos. c. iv. p. 246.

depending, not on the transient flower of youth, and the seductive delicacy of effeminate graces, but on the ineffable harmony of a form which realized the sublime conceptions of Homer and Phidias concerning their fabulous divinities, and which shone in the autumn of life with undiminished effulgence.* The affection of Socrates, though infinitely removed from impurity, resembled rather the ardour of love than the calm moderation of friendship. The sage, whose company was courted by his other disciples, himself courted the company of Alcibiades; and when the ungrateful youth sometimes escaped to his licentious companions, the philosopher pursued him with the eagerness of a father or master anxious to recover a fugitive son, or much valued slave.† At the battle of Potidæa he saved the life of his pupil, and in order to gratify the love of military glory, which already animated his youthful bosom, the sage obtained for Alcibiades the prize of valour, which the universal consent of the Athenians thought due to himself. At the fatal engagement of Delium, Alcibiades, it is said, had an opportunity of returning the more substantial favour, by saving the precious life of Socrates‡; and it may well be supposed that an interchange of such important favours would straiten the bands of their mutual friendship, during which the powers of reason and fancy were directed, with unabating diligence, to improve the understanding, and excite the virtue of Alcibiades.

But this favourite youth laboured under a defect, which could not be compensated by the highest birth, the most splendid fortune, the noblest endowments of mind and body, and even the inestimable friendship of Socrates. He wanted an honest|| heart. This we are warranted to affirm on the authority of contemporary writers, who acknowledge, that first admiration, and then interest, was the foundation of his attachment to the illustrious sage, by whose

Deceitful
character of
Alcibiades.

* Plut. in Alcibiad.

† Plut. *ibid.*

‡ Strabo, p. 330, & Plut. in Alcibiad.

|| Lysias cont. Alcibiad. et Xenoph. Memorab. Socrat. l. i. p. 715.

instruction he expected to become, not a good, but an able, man. Some inclination to virtue he might, in such company, perhaps feel, but more probably feign; and the nicest discernment might mistake the real character of a man, who could adopt, at pleasure, the most opposite manners; and who, as will appear from the subsequent events of his various life, could surpass the splendid magnificence of Athens, or the rigid frugality of Sparta; could conform as interest required, to the laborious exercises of the Thebans, or to the voluptuous indolence of Ionia; assume the soft effeminacy of an Eastern prince, or rival the sturdy vices of the drunken Thracians.*

His views
favoured by
the state of
Greece.
Olymp.
xc. 1.
A. C. 420.

The first specimen of his political conduct discovered the extraordinary resources of his versatile mind. He opposed the peace of Nicias, as the work of a rival, whom he wished to supplant. His ambition longed for war, and the Spartans deserved his resentment, having, in all their transactions with Athens, testified the utmost respect for Nicias, while they were at no pains to conceal their want of regard for himself, though his family had been long connected with their republic by an intercourse of hospitality, and he had endeavoured to strengthen that connexion by his personal good offices to the Lacedæmonians taken in Sphacteria. To gratify at once his resentment, his ambition, and his jealousy, he determined to renew the war with Sparta; a design by no means difficult at the present juncture.

In compliance with the peace of Nicias, the Spartans withdrew their troops from Amphipolis; but they could restore neither that city, nor the neighbouring places in Macedon, to the dominion of Athens. The Athenians, agreeably to the treaty, allowed the captives taken in Sphacteria to meet the longing embraces of their kinsmen and friends; but good policy forbade their surrendering Pylus, until the enemy had prepared to perform the conditions stipulated in return. Mutual unwillingness, or inability, to comply with the articles of

* Nepos in Alcibiad.

peace, sowed the seeds of animosity, which found a favourable soil in both republics. The authority of those magistrates, who supported the pacific measures of Nicias and Pleistoanax, had expired. The Spartan youth wished, by new hostilities, to cancel the memory of a war, which had been carried on without profit, and terminated with dishonour. But the wiser part perceived that better success could not be expected while the Athenians possessed Pylus. In their eagerness to recover that fortress, they renewed their alliance with the Thebans, from whom they received Panactum, which they hoped to exchange for Pylus; forgetting, in this transaction, an important clause in their treaty with Athens, "that neither of the contracting powers should, without mutual communication and consent, conclude any new alliance." The Thebans rejoiced in the prospect of embroiling the affairs of Athens and Sparta; and the Corinthians, guided by the same hostile views, readily concurred with the Thebans, and openly re-entered into the Lacedæmonian confederacy.*

Having concluded this negotiation, the Spartans, who yielded to none in the art of dissembling, despatched ambassadors to Athens, excusing what they termed an apparent infringement of the treaty, and requesting that state to accept Panactum (which had been carefully dismantled) in exchange for Pylus. The senate of Athens heard their proposal without suspicion, especially as they declared themselves invested with full powers to embrace every reasonable plan of present accommodation and permanent friendship. It now remained for the ambassadors to propose their demand in the popular assembly, which they had reason to hope might be deceived still more easily than the senate. But in this expectation they were disappointed by a contrivance of Alcibiades, no less singular than audacious. Having invited the ambassadors to an entertainment, during which he talked of their republic with more than his wonted respect, and testified the utmost solicitude for

He outwits
the Spartan
ambassadors.
Olymp.
xc. 1.
A. C. 420.

* Thucyd. i. v. passim.

the success of their negotiation, he observed to them, that one circumstance gave him much concern, their having mentioned full powers. They must beware of repeating that error in the assembly, because the natural rapacity of the populace, apprised of that circumstance, would not fail to insist on such conditions as the honour of Sparta could not possibly comply with. If they concealed the extent of their commission, the declaring of which could only serve to indicate timidity on the one side, and to provoke insolence on the other, he pledged himself to obtain the recovery of Pylus, and the gratification of their utmost hopes. On this occasion the Spartans injudiciously confided in a man, who had been irritated by the former neglect and ingratitude of their republic. When they appeared next day in the assembly, Alcibiades demanded, with a loud voice, the object and extent of their commission. According to the concerted plan, they denied their having full powers. The artful Athenian, affecting a transport of indignation, arraigned the audacity and baseness of a people by whom his own unsuspecting temper had been egregiously abused. "But yesterday they declared their full powers in the senate; they denied to-day what yesterday they displayed with ostentation. Such (I now perceive) is the usual duplicity of their republic. It is thus, they have restored Amphipolis. It is thus, Athenians! they have restored the neighbouring towns in Macedon: it is thus they have, indeed, put you in possession of Panactum, but with demolished walls; and after concluding an alliance with Athens, ratified by solemn oath, most treacherously and daringly infringed it, by entering into a league with Thebes, your determined and inveterate enemy. Can you still, men of Athens! tamely submit to such indignities? Do you not expel such traitors (pointing to the ambassadors) from your presence, and from your city?" This extraordinary harangue totally disconcerted the Spartans. Had their confusion allowed them to extenuate their fault by declaring the truth, the least reflection must have suggested, that Alcibiades would represent their simple story as a new turn of ingenious artifice. They retired abruptly from the

assembly;* Nicias, and the other partisans of Sparta, shared their disgrace; and the Athenians were soon afterwards persuaded by Alcibiades to embrace the Argive alliance.†

It might be expected, that the weight of such a powerful confederacy should have speedily crushed the debility of Sparta, already exhausted by the former war. But the military operations of Greece depended less on the relative strength of contending powers, than on the alternate preponderance of domestic factions. In the year following the treaty, the Athenians sent a small body of troops to assist their Peloponnesian allies in the reduction of Epidaurus, Tegea, and other hostile cities in Argolis and Arcadia. Yet in the ensuing year, when the Spartans, dreading the loss of some cities, and the defection of others, made a vigorous effort to retrieve their authority in Peloponnesus, the Athenians alone discovered little inclination, and exerted no activity, to obstruct their measures for that purpose. Pleistoanax being a partisan of the peace of Nicias, the Spartans intrusted the command to Agis, his more warlike colleague. All Lacedæmonians of the military age were summoned to the field. The dangerous expedient of arming the Helots was adopted on this important emergence. The Spartan allies showed unusual ardour in their cause. The Thebans sent ten thousand foot, and one thousand horsemen;‡ the Corinthians two thousand heavy-armed men; the Megarians almost an equal number; the ancient cities of Palléné and Sicyon in Achaia gave a powerful and ready assistance; while the small, but generous republic of Phlius, whose territory, bordering on Argolis, was appointed for the rendezvous of the confederates,

The Peloponnesian war renewed.
Olymp. xc. 2

* Thucydides mentions the shock of an earthquake, which occasioned the dissolution of that assembly, before coming to any conclusion.

† Thucyd. i. v. p. 374, & seqq. Plut. in Alcibiad.

‡ They had, however, but five hundred horses; ἑπταξοδίου καὶ ἀνιπτοῖ ἰσοῖ. Perhaps the ἀνιπτοῖ, those not provided with horses, served as attendants on the horsemen. The mixing of light infantry with the cavalry was frequent in later times; but of this hereafter.

took the field, with the whole body of citizens and slaves capable of bearing arms.*

The Spartan and Argive armies face each other, but part without engaging. Olymp. xc. 3. A. C. 418.

The Argives observed the approaching storm, and prepared to resist it. The Eleans and Mantineans joined them; and although the Athenians were long expected in vain, the Argives did not lose courage, but boldly marched forth to oppose the invasion. The skilful movements of king Agis intercepted their return to Argos; the high grounds above them were occupied by the Corinthians and Phliasians; their retreat towards Nemea was cut off by the Bœotians and Megarians. A battle seemed inevitable in the winding vale of Argos; but it is easier to admire, than explain the subsequent conduct of either army. Whether the Argive commanders† were disconcerted by the judicious position of the enemy, or that compassion touched their minds on perceiving such numerous bodies of men, chiefly natives of the same peninsula, sprung from the same blood, and speaking the same Doric tongue, prepared to embrace their parricidal hands in kindred blood; or that, being secretly partisans of aristocracy,‡ they were unwilling to come to extremities with Sparta; it is certain that instead of joining battle, they entered into conference with the Lacedæmonian king. In consequence of this unexpected measure, a truce was concluded between the chiefs, without the concurrence or knowledge of the officers or troops in either army. The Argives, Thrasylus and Alciphron, engaged that their countrymen should give complete satisfaction for the injuries of which they were accused; and king Agis, whose authority, by the Spartan laws, was absolute in the field, led off his obsequious army.

* Thucyd. i. v. p. 384, & seqq.

† Or rather Thrasyllus, who was one of five generals, but who seems to have enjoyed some pre-eminence over his colleagues. Perhaps it was his turn to command.

‡ Alciphron, who, with Thrasyllus, was the principal agent in this affair, was the "πρόξενος Λακεδαιμονίων," the public host of the Lacedæmonians. Thucyd. p. 386.

Whatever might be the cause of this measure, it occasioned (after the first pause of silent astonishment) universal discontent, followed by loud and licentious clamours. The Spartans complained, "That after assembling such a body of men as had scarcely ever been collected in Peloponnesus, whose attachment to their cause was ardent, whose numbers and courage were invincible, and after surrounding their enemies on every side, and depriving them of every resource, the glorious hope, or rather certainty, of the most complete and important victory, should have been sacrificed, in one moment, by the caprice, the cowardice, or the corruption of their general." The Argives lamented, "That their numerous enemies, whom they had a fair opportunity of engaging to advantage in their own country, should have been allowed to escape from their hands by a hasty and ill-judged composition. Nor did they confine their resentment to vain complaints. The most daring or most seditious attacked the houses of Thrasyllus and Alciphron. The rest soon joined in the tumult. The effects of the generals were plundered or confiscated; and their lives were saved with difficulty, by the respected sanctuary of Argive Juno.

Discontents
hereby oc-
casioned
in both
states.

Though the Greeks, and indeed the ancients in general, seldom employed resident ambassadors in foreign states, Alcibiades was then invested with that character at Argos. His activity would not fail to promote the popular tumult, in which his own and the Athenian interest was concerned. On a future occasion he boasted, that, chiefly at his instigation, the Argives and their allies were persuaded to break the truce; a measure greatly facilitated by the long-expected arrival of the Athenian transports, conveying a reinforcement of twelve hundred soldiers, and a body of three hundred cavalry. Encouraged by this reinforcement, the Argives, regardless of the truce, attacked the ancient and wealthy city of Orchomenus in Arcadia, which, after a feeble resistance, submitted to their arms. They next proceeded to lay siege to the neighbouring town of Tegea, a design extreme-

Alcibiades
persuades
the Argives
to break the
truce.
Olymp.
xc. 3.
A. C. 418.

ly contrary to the inclination of the Elians, who were eager to chastise the inhabitants of Lepreum, a district on their own frontier. The Argives, however, paid no regard to their demands; and the Elians, offended by this contumely, returned home in disgust.

The Spartans take the field. The Lacedæmonians learned with indignation the submission of Orchomenes, the siege of Tegea, and the open infraction of the treaty. They had formerly murmured against the imprudent or perfidious measures of king Agis; but when they felt the full effects of his misconduct, their resentment became outrageous. In the first emotions of their animosity, they determined to destroy his house, and to subject him to a fine in value several thousand pounds sterling, which in all probability, he would have been unable to pay. But his eloquence and address appeased the general clamour; and, as the anger of popular assemblies is easily converted into pity, he was again taken into favour. His known talents for war recommended him to the command of the army; and he assured his countrymen, that his future services should speedily wipe off the undeserved stain on his character. The Spartans, however, first elected on this occasion ten counsellors to attend their kings in the field, to restrain their too precipitate resolves, and control their too absolute authority.

Battle of Mantinæa. Having taken this precaution, the necessity of which seemed justified by recent experience, they summoned the assistance of their allies, whose ardour to renew hostilities was equal to their own. They proceeded with a numerous army (though inferior to that formerly collected, as their confederates beyond the Isthmus had not yet time to join them,) and marched directly to the town of Mantinæa, expecting either to take that place, or to oblige the enemy to defend it, by withdrawing his troops from the siege of Tegea. The approach of the Argives prevented the surprise of Mantinæa; and both armies, whose ambition or resentment had been so lately disappointed of an opportunity to

display their valour or their fury, eagerly prepared for an engagement.

According to ancient custom, the leaders of the several nations addressed their respective troops. Military oration.

The Mantinéans were animated “by the sight of their city, for the defence of which, as well as for the safety of their wives and children, they were exhorted valiantly to contend. The event of the battle must determine the important alternative of dominion and servitude; dominion which they had lately assumed over various cities in Arcadia, and servitude, which they had already suffered under the cruel tyranny of Sparta.” The Argives were reminded “of their ancient pre-eminence in Peloponnesus, which they had recently recovered, and which their honour was now called to maintain. They were reminded of the long and bloody wars which they had formerly carried on, in order to repel the usurpation of a powerful and ambitious neighbour. This was the same enemy who actually provoked their arms, and gave them an opportunity of revenging in one day, the accumulated injustice of many centuries.” The Athenians heard, and repeated, “That it was glorious to march at the head of gallant and faithful allies, and to show themselves deserving of their hereditary renown. They yielded to none in bravery; their power was unrivalled; and when they had overcome the Lacedæmonians, even in the Peloponnesus, their dominion would be more extensive and more secure.”

The Spartans briefly exhorted their followers, and each other, “to exert that innate valour which had ever animated their breasts, and which could receive no additional force from a tedious display of useless words.” Thus saying, they marched with a slow and firm step, regulated by the sound of the flute, to meet the impetuous onset* of the Argives and Athenians. Above a thousand of the former, chosen from the flower of the noblest youth of The Spartans victorious.

* The admirable verses of Milton, who was a diligent reader of Thucydides, are the best commentary on this battle :

Argos, had been employed since the first dissensions occasioned by the peace of Nicias, in the constant exercises of arms, in order to maintain the honourable pretensions of their country. They behaved with signal bravery. The Athenians were not wanting to their ancient fame. The Mantinæans strenuously defended every thing most dear to them. But the allied army had been considerably weakened by the desertion of the Elians; and the martial enthusiasm of king Agis, seconded by the persevering valour of the Spartans,* decided the fortune of the battle. The allies were repulsed, broken, thrown into disorder, and put to flight. The Spartans, unwilling to irritate their despair, or superstitiously complying with an ancient maxim, which enjoined them "to make a bridge of gold for a flying enemy," did not continue the pursuit, but speedily returned home to celebrate the Carnean festival, rejoicing in the restored lustre of their arms, and at having recovered their authority in the Peloponnesus.

Anon they move

In perfect phalanx to the Dorian mood
Of flutes and soft recorders, such as rais'd
To height of noblest temper heroes old,
Arming to battle; and instead of rage,
Deliberate valour breath'd firm and unmov'd, &c.

Par. Lost. b. i.

* If the text is not corrupt, the words of Thucydides are very remarkable:

Αλλα μάλιστα δη κατα παντα την εμπειρια Λακεδαιμονιοι ελασσωθεντες, την ανδρειαν εδειξαν ουχ ησσαν περιγενομενοι. p. 394. "That the Lacedæmonians, exceedingly inferior as they appeared on this occasion to the enemy in military skill, showed themselves as much superior to them in true manly courage." It appears from the description of the battle, that the Lacedæmonians were defective, not in skill, but in discipline. In approaching the enemy, their right wing extended too far, which frequently happened from the desire of every soldier to cover his unarmed side by the shield of the next person on his right. In consequence of this tendency, the Lacedæmonian left wing was overreached by the enemy's right. Agis ordered the Skiritæ and Brasidians to wheel from their places on the right, and lengthen the front of the left wing: commanding the battalions of Hipponoidas and Aristocles to fill up the vacuity occasioned by this movement. But these generals absolutely refused to obey orders, and were afterwards banished Sparta on that account. Thucyd. p. 393, & seqq.

This, in fact, proved the immediate consequence of a battle, which was not so bloody as might have been expected, the vanquished having lost *eleven*, and the victors only *three* hundred. But the revolutions of Greece chiefly depended on the fluctuating politics of domestic factions. The Spartans had a numerous party in Argos itself, who, emboldened by the recent victory of their friends, immediately took arms, abolished the popular government, destroyed the partisans of Athens, abjured the league with that state, and entered into a new confederacy with Sparta. This event happened a few weeks after the engagement, and towards the close of the fourteenth winter of the Peloponnesian war. During the two following years, Argos paid dearly for a moment of transient splendour, having undergone three bloody revolutions, which renewed the atrocities of Corcyrean sedition. The contest ended, as in Corcyra, in favour of the Athenians and democracy.

Tumults in
Argos.

The affairs of the Peloponnesus had long occupied, without engrossing the attention of Athens. The year preceding her alliance with Argos, the Athenians reduced the rebellious city of Scioné, in the peninsula of Palléné, against which their resentment had been provoked to the utmost fury, because the Scioneans, though inhabiting a country almost surrounded by the sea, had defied the naval power of Athens, and, amidst the misfortunes of that state, revolted to her enemies. The citizens of Scioné became the victims of a revenge equally cruel and imprudent. The males, above the age of puberty, were put to the sword; the women and children dragged into servitude; the name and honours of the city extinguished for ever; and the territory planted with a new colony, consisting chiefly of Platean exiles. These enormous cruelties alarmed the terror, exasperated the resentment, and invigorated the resistance, of the neighbouring republics. Their defence was undertaken by Perdiccas, king of Macedon, whom the Athenians therefore interdicted the use of the Grecian seas. But that ambitious people made so little progress in reducing the Macedonian

Massacre of
the Scione-
ans.

coast, that they finally desisted from this hopeless design, contenting themselves with guarding those places which still avowed their allegiance, with re-establishing domestic order, and with collecting the customary tribute from their numerous colonies and dependencies.

The Athenians attack Melos. Olymp. xci. 1. A. C. 416. The productive industry diffused through all branches of the community, the equality of private fortune, the absence of habitual luxury, together with the natural advantages of their soil and climate, enabled the Greeks to flourish amidst furious and bloody wars. After a short period of tranquillity, their exuberant population overflowed, and was obliged to discharge itself in foreign colonies or conquests. Such a period Athens enjoyed for five years after the peace of Nicias, as the Macedonian and Argive wars only employed her activity, without exhausting her strength. The necessity of exerting her superfluous vigour in some useful and honourable design, was fatally experienced, in the year following, by the unfortunate island of Melos, one of the largest of the Cyclades, lying directly opposite to the Cape of Malea, the southern promontory of Laconia.

Description of that island. This beautiful island, sixty miles in circumference, of a circular form, of an agreeable temperature, and affording, in peculiar perfection,* the usual productions of a fine climate, had early invited the colonisation of the Spartans; and the happy settlement had enjoyed political independence for seven hundred years. The strength and importance of the capital, which had the same name with the island, may be understood by the armament of thirty ships, and nearly three thousand soldiers, which the Athenians brought against it. Before they commenced hostilities, either by attacking the city, or by ravaging the country,

* The island of Melos is every where impregnated with iron, bitumen, sulphur, and other minerals. It is described by Tournefont as a great laboratory. Its subterranean fires are supposed to give peculiar force and flavour to its wines and fruits.

they sent ambassadors to the Melians in order to persuade them to surrender, without incurring the danger of the punishment of an unequal, and probably a fruitless, resistance. The cautious islanders, well acquainted with the eloquence and address of the enemy with whom they had to contend, denied them permission to speak before the public assembly, but appointed a deputation of the magistrates to hear and examine their demands. The Athenian ambassadors were received in the senate-house, where a most important and interesting conference was held,* which, while it engages our compassion for

Conference
between
the commis-
sioners of
Athens and
Melos.

the unhappy victims of ambition, explains the prevailing sentiments and opinions of the Greeks in matters of war and government, and illustrates the daring injustice of the Athenian republic. The ambassadors began the dialogue, by observing, "That since the distrust of the Melians, probably arising from the conscious weakness of their cause, had refused them the liberty of addressing, in a continued oration, the assembly of the people, they should use that mode of conference which seemed most agreeable to the inclinations of their adversaries, and patiently listen to the objections which might occur to any part of their discourse." *Melians*. "The proposal is just and reasonable; but you have come hither with an armed force, which renders you judges in your own cause. Though vanquished in debate, you may still conquer by arms; but if *we* yield in argument, we must submit to slavery." *Athenians*. "If you intend to talk of matters foreign to the subject, we have done." *M*. "It is surely excusable for those, whose all is at stake, to turn themselves on every side, and to suggest their suspicions and their doubts. But let the conference be carried on in the manner which you have proposed." *A*. "And on both sides, let all superfluous arguments be omitted; either that *we*, having repelled and conquered the Persians, are entitled to govern the Greeks; or that *you*, being a colony of Lacedæmon, are entitled to inde-

* Thucyd. l. v. p. 400 & seqq.

pendence. Let us speak like men of sense and experience, who know that the equal rules of justice are observed only by men of an equal condition ; but that it belongs to the strong to command, and to the weak to obey ; because such is the interest of both." *M.* "How can our interest and yours coincide?" *A.* "By submission, you will save your lives ; and by preserving you, we will increase our own power." *M.* "Consider (for this also must be mentioned, since disregarding justice, you hearken only to *utility*) that your unprovoked invasion of the Melians will rouse the resentment of all Greece ; will render all neutral states your enemies ; and, if ever your empire should decline, (as what human grandeur is not subject to decay ?) will expose you to a dreadful and just punishment." *A.* "The continuance of our empire is the care of fortune and the gods ; the little that man can do to preserve it, we will not neglect. The liberty of Melos offends the pride of the neighbouring isles, and stirs them to rebellion. The interest of our present power must prevail over the apprehension of future danger." *M.* "While the Athenians are thus prepared to incur danger for the preservation of empire, and their subject islands to defy death for the hope of freedom, would it not be base cowardice in us, who have long enjoyed liberty, to decline any toil or danger for maintaining the most valuable and the most glorious of all human possessions?" *A.* "We are not come hither to dispute the prize of valour, but to offer terms of safety." *M.* "The event of war is uncertain ; there is some hope in resistance, none in submission." *A.* "Flattering hope often deceives the prosperous and the powerful, but always destroys the weak and unfortunate, who, disregarding natural means of preservation, have recourse to idle dreams of the fancy, to omens, oracles, divination, and all the fallacious illusions of a vain superstition." *M.* "We know that it will be difficult for the Melians to contend with the strength and fortune of Athens : yet we trust that the gods will uphold the justice of our cause ; and that the Lacedæmonians, from whom we are descended, moved by a sense of honour, will defend their own blood." *A.* "Be-

lieve not that Athens will be forsaken by the gods. Ambition is implanted in man. The wisdom of providence, not an Athenian decree, has established the inevitable law, that the strong should command the weak. As to the assistance of the Lacedæmonians, we sincerely congratulate your happy ignorance of their principles. Whatever equity prevails in their domestic institutions, they have but one rule respecting their neighbours, which is, to regulate all their proceedings towards them by their own conveniency." *M.* "It is chiefly this consideration which affords us hope, that they will not forsake an island which they have planted, lest they should be regarded as traitors, than which nothing could be more unfavourable to their interest, especially since Melos, lying in the neighbourhood of their own territories, would be a dangerous possession in the hands of an enemy." *A.* "The timid caution of the Lacedæmonians seldom takes the field, even against their inveterate adversaries in the Peloponnesus, unless when their standard is crowded by numerous allies. It is not to be imagined that, for the safety of a colony, they will, unassisted and alone, cross the Cretan sea, to contend with the superior navy of Athens." *M.* "Should the Lacedæmonians be averse to sail, they can transport others in their stead; and the extent of the Cretan sea may elude the vigilance of your ships; or, should that probability fail, the Lacedæmonians may attack your subjects on the continent, and accomplish the designs of the warlike Brasidas." *A.* "You are determined, it seems, to learn, by fatal experience, that fear never compelled the Athenians to desist from their commenced undertakings; especially never to raise the siege of any place which they had once invested. For during the whole of this long conference, you have not made a single observation capable of affording any just ground of confidence. Dazzled by the splendour of words, you talk of honour and independence, rejecting the offers of a powerful state, whose arms you are unable to resist, and whose protection you might obtain at the expense of a moderate tribute. Lest shame should have any share in this dangerous behaviour, we shall leave you to consult pri-

vately, only reminding you once more, that your present deliberations involve the fate of your country."

Magnanimity of the Melians.

The Athenian ambassadors retired; and shortly afterwards, the Melians recalled them, and "declared their unanimous resolution not to betray,

in one unlucky hour, the liberty which they had maintained for seven hundred years; depending on the vigorous assistance of their Lacedæmonian kinsmen, and trusting especially in that divine providence which had hitherto most wonderfully preserved them amidst the general convulsions of Greece. But they entreated the Athenians to accept their offers of neutrality, and to abstain from unprovoked violence." The

Conquest of Melos, and cruel treatment of the inhabitants.

ambassadors prepared for returning to the camp, leaving the commissioners with a sarcastic threat, "That of all men, in such a delicate situation, the Melians alone thought the future more certain than the past, and would grievously suffer for their

folly, in preferring to the proposals of certain and immediate safety, the deceitfulness of hope, the instability of fortune, and the vain prospect of Lacedæmonian aid." The Athenians, irritated by opposition, invested, without delay, the capital of Melos, which was blocked up for several months by sea and land. The besieged, after suffering cruelly by famine, made several desperate sallies, seized the Athenian magazines, and destroyed part of their works. But towards the end of winter, their resistance was defeated by the vigorous efforts of the enemy, combined with domestic treason. The males above the age of fourteen shared the unhappy fate of the Scioneans. The women and children were subjected to perpetual servitude, and five hundred new inhabitants, drawn from the neighbouring colonies of Athens, were sent to occupy the vacant lands, which had been cultivated and adorned for seven centuries by the labour of the exterminated Melians.*

* Thucyd. l. v. p. 410. ad fin.

CHAP. XIX.

Alcibiades promotes the Sicilian Expedition.—Revolutions in that Island.—Embassy to Athens.—Extravagant Views of Alcibiades.—Opposed by Nicias.—The Athenians prepare to invade Sicily.—Their Armament beheld with Suspicion by the Italian States.—Deliberations concerning the Mode of carrying on the War.—Alcibiades takes Catana by Stratagem.—His Intrigues in Messenè.—He is unseasonably recalled to Athens.—Charged with Treason and Impiety.—Escapes to Sparta.—Nicias determines to attack Syracuse.—Description of that City.—The Athenians prevail in the Battle.—Return to Catana and Naxos.

THE inhuman massacre of the Melians has been ascribed by an instructive, though often inaccurate biographer,* to the unfeeling pride of Alcibiades. But more ancient and authentic writers,† whose silence seems to exculpate the son of Clinias from this atrocious accusation, represent him as the principal author of the expedition against Sicily; an expedition not more unjust in its principle, than fatal in its consequences.

The salutary union between the princes of Syracuse and Agrigentum triumphed, as we had occasion to relate, over the ambition and resources of Carthage. Sicily flourished under the virtuous administration of Gelon and Theron;‡ but its tranquillity was disturbed by the dissensions of their immediate successors. Hieron, king of Syracuse, proved victorious in a long and bloody war, during which the incapacity and mis-

Alcibiades promotes the expedition into Sicily.

Revolutions in that island.
A. C. 479—468.

* Plut. in Alcib.

† Thucyd. i. v. Lysias. Orat. cont. Alcib.

‡ See above, p. 36.

fortunes of his rival Thrasideus emboldened the resentment of his subjects, already provoked by his injustice and cruelty.* He escaped the popular fury, but fell a victim to his own despair; and the Agrigentines, having expelled the family of an odious tyrant, instituted a republican form of policy.

Reign of
Hieron in
Syracuse.

The false, cruel and avaricious Hieron, (for such he is described† in the first years of his reign,) was not likely to benefit under the dangerous influence of prosperity. But his mind was still capable of reflection; and in the course of a long sickness and confinement, he discovered the emptiness of such objects as kings are taught to admire, and had recourse to the solid pleasures of the mind. By conversing with Grecian philosophers, he learned the most important of all lessons, that of conversing with himself; a conversation which none but the most virtuous or the most vicious of men can long and frequently maintain, without deriving from it essential profit. With the improvement of his understanding, the sentiments of Hieron improved; his character and manners underwent a total change; and the latter years of his reign adorn the history of Sicily, and the age in which he lived.‡ The poets Simonides, Æschylus and Bacchilides, frequented his court, and admired the greatness of his mind, rather than of his fortune. The sublime genius of Pindar has celebrated the magnificent generosity of his illustrious patron. And in an age when writing was the picture of conversation, because men talked as they needed not have been ashamed to write, the impartial disciple of Socrates, who had nothing to hope or to fear from the ashes of a king of Sicily, has represented Hieron, in the Dialogue entitled from his name,|| as a model of wisdom and virtue.

The tyranny of Thrasylus, and establishment

It is a mortifying reflection, that the inimitable qualities of a virtuous prince should naturally encourage the sloth, or irritate the vices, of a degenerate successor. The glorious reign of Hieron

* Diodor. l. xi. c. lx. & seqq.

† Ælian. l. ix. c. vii.

‡ Diodor Sic. l. xi. c. lxvi.

|| Xenophont. Hieron.

was followed by the bloody tyranny of Thrasybulus; a wretch who, disgracing the throne and human nature, was expelled from Sicily by the just indignation of his subjects. Resentment is more permanent than gratitude. The Syracusans forgot the fame of Gelon; they forgot the recent merit of Hieron; and, that they might never be again subjected to a tyrant like Thrasybulus, exchanged the odious power of kings for the dangerous fury of democracy.*

of democracy.
Olymp.
lxxviii. 3.
A. C. 466.

The inferior cities having successively imitated the example of Agrigentum and Syracuse, the Grecian colonies in Sicily experienced the disorders of that tumultuous liberty which had so long prevailed in the mother country. Distracted by internal discord, and harassed by external hostility, they had neither leisure nor inclination to take part in the politics of Greece. The republic of Syracuse, which was alone capable of interposing with effect, in the quarrels of that country, imitated, instead of opposing, the ambition of Athens. Most of the Dorian settlements had become confederates, or rather tributaries, to the Syracusans; and towards the commencement of the Peloponnesian war, that aspiring people, though torn by domestic factions strenuously exerted their valour against the Ionic settlements of Leontium, Catana, and Naxos.

Effects of
that revolution.

While these unhappy islanders struggled with the agitations of a government more turbulent than the whirlpools of Scylla and Charybdis, they likewise enjoyed, however, the peculiar advantages of democracy; which, of all political constitutions, presents the widest scope to the exercise of superior talents, and has always been the most productive in great men. The active fermentation of popular assemblies had given the eloquence of a Gorgias to Leontium, and the abilities of a Hermocrates to Syracuse. In the sixth year of the Peloponnesian war, the former came to Athens to solicit the protection

Dissensions
in Sicily, in
which the
Athenians
interfere.
Olymp.
lxxxviii. 3.
A. C. 426.

* Aristot. de Repub. l. v. c. xii.

of that republic against the unjust usurpation of the Sicilian capital. His arguments convinced the judgment, and the brilliant harmony of his style transported the sensibility, of the Athenians. They immediately despatched twenty ships of war to the assistance of their Ionic brethren. Two years afterwards a similar request was made, and as readily complied with; and the Athenians seemed disposed to engage with vigour in the war, when the foresight of Hermocrates, alarmed by the intrusion of these ambitious strangers, promoted a general congress of the states of Sicily.

Appeased
by Hermo-
crates.
Olymp.
lxxxix. 1.
A. C. 424.

This convention was held at the central town of Gela; it was attended by the plenipotentiaries of all the Doric and Ionic cities. Hermocrates represented Syracuse; and illustrious as that republic was, approved himself worthy of its highest honours. While the deputies of other states dwelt on their particular grievances, and urged their separate interests, Hermocrates regarded and enforced only the general interest of Sicily. His arguments finally prevailed, and all parties were engaged to terminate their domestic contests, lest the whole island should fall a prey to a foreign power.*

New dis-
ensions.
Olymp.
xci. 1.
A. C. 416.

But a plan of union so seasonable and salutary, depended on the transient influence of a single man, while the principles of discord were innumerable and permanent. Within a few years after this event, Leontium was taken and destroyed, its inhabitants reduced to the wretched condition of exiles, and its confederates, the Ægesteans, closely besieged by the conjunct

Demands of
the Æges-
teans;

arms of Selinus and Syracuse. The unfortunate communities again sent an embassy to Athens, pleading the rights of consanguinity, and addressing not only the passions but the interest of their powerful allies. "The Athenians," they insisted, "were bound by every principle of sound policy to repress the growing greatness of Syracuse, which must otherwise become a formidable

* Thucyd. p. 290.

accession to the Peloponnesian league; and now was the time for this meritorious undertaking, while their Ionian kinsmen in Sicily were still capable of exerting some vigour in their own defence." In order to enforce these arguments, the ambassadors of Ægesta gave an ostentatious, and even a very false description of the wealth of their republic; which, according to their account, was capable of defraying the whole expense of the war. Their fellow citizens at home carried on the deception by a most unjustifiable artifice, displaying to the Athenian commissioners sent to confer with them, the borrowed riches of their neighbours, and raising by extraordinary expedients, the sum of sixty talents of silver, to maintain, for a month, an Athenian fleet of sixty sail, as if they had purposed monthly to repeat this large subsidy, which at once exhausted their faculties.*

The arguments of their Sicilian allies were doubtless entitled to considerable weight with the Athenians; yet various reasons might have dissuaded that ambitious people from undertaking, at the present conjuncture, an expedition against the powerful republic of Syracuse. The cloud of war, which Pericles saw advancing with rapid motion from the Peloponnesus, had been at length dispelled by the valour and fortune of the Athenians; not, however, before the arms of Brasidas had shaken their empire to the foundation. The same storm might be again collected, if the Athenians removed their armies from home, especially if they were unfortunate abroad, since the wounded pride of Sparta would eagerly seize the first opportunity of revenge. The rebellion of the Macedonian cities was still unsubdued, and it would be highly imprudent and dangerous, before recovering the allegiance of those ancient possessions, to attempt the acquisition of new territories. Should the Athenian expedition against Sicily be crowned with the most flattering success, it would still be difficult, nay, impossible to preserve such a distant and extensive conquest; but

with which
the Athe-
nians im-
prudently
comply.

* Thucyd. p. 444.

should this ambitious design fail in the execution, as there was too good reason to apprehend, the misfortunes of the Athenians, whose greatness was the object both of terror and of envy, would encourage the rebellious spirit of their subjects and allies, excite the latent animosity of the Peloponnesians, and reinforce their ancient enemies by the resentment and hostility of Syracuse and her confederates, justly provoked by the daring invasion of their island.

These prudential considerations were unable to cool the ardour of the Athenian assembly inflamed by the breath of their favourite Alcibiades. It is a just and profound observation of Machiavel, that

Extrava-
gant views
of Alcibi-
ades.

the real powers of government are often contracted to a narrower point in republics than in monarchies; an observation which that sagacious statesman had learned from the experience of his native city, and which he might have confirmed by the history of the Greeks, whose political measures, and even whose national character, depended on the transient influence of a few individuals. Under the direction of Aristides and Themistocles, the Athenians displayed the soundest policy, adorned by unshaken probity and by heroic valour. Cimon inspired the generous ambition which animated his own breast: a dignified grandeur and magnanimous firmness distinguished the long administration, I had almost said reign, of Pericles. The son of Clinias succeeded to the power and authority, without succeeding to the virtues of those great men, whom his pride disdained to imitate. Regardless of order and decency, with a licentious magnificence most offensive to the spirit of republican equality, he blended a certain elegance of manners, which not only repelled censure, but attracted applause. Thus dispensed from observing the established formalities of private life, he expected that the glory of his administration might soar above the ordinary dictates of political prudence.*

* See Plut. in Alcibiad. Isocrat. de Pace; above all the animated picture in Plato's Republic (l. viii. cap. cc. & seqq.) of which Alcibiades, doubtless, was the original.

Though he preferred what was useful to what was honest, he preferred what was brilliant to what was useful, and, disdain- ing the common gifts of valour and fortune, aspired at objects extraordinary and unattainable. The recovery of the Athenian possessions, and the re-establishment of an empire, already too extensive, might have satisfied the ambition of a bold and ac- tive statesman. But the extravagant hopes of Alcibiades ex- patiated in a wider field. The acquisition of Sicily itself he regarded only as a necessary introduction to wider and more important conquests. The intermediate situation of that beau- tiful and fertile island opened, on the one hand, an easy com- munication with the eastern front of Italy, which, from Brun- dusium to the Sicilian frith, was adorned by populous and flourishing cities; and on the other, afforded a short and safe passage to the northern shores of Africa, which for many ages, had been cultivated and enriched by the united labours of the Greeks and Carthaginians. In his waking or sleeping dreams, Alcibiades grasped the wide extent of those distant possessions, by the resources of which he expected finally to subdue the pertinacious spirit, and obstinate resistance, of the Pelopon- nesians. Thus secure at home, and sovereign of the sea, Athens might incorporate with her own force that of the con- quered provinces, and maintain an unshaken dominion over the most delightful portion of the earth, while her fortunate citizens, delivered from all laborious and mercenary cares, would be supported by the contributions of subject nations, and enabled to display, in their full extent, that taste for splen- dour and magnificence, that greatness of soul and superiority of genius, which justly entitled them to the empire of the world.*

Allured by these extravagant and flattering prospects of grandeur, the Athenians, in two suc- cessive assemblies, held at the short interval of five days, agreed to the resolution of making war against Sicily, and of raising such naval and

The Sici-
lian expedi-
tion oppo-
sed by
Nicias.
Olymp.
xci. 2.
A. C. 415.

* Isocrat. de Pace. Andocid. Orat. iii. p. 269, & Aristoph. Vesp. ver. 656.

military force as seemed necessary for carrying it on with vigour and success. While they still deliberated on the latter object, the virtuous Nicias, who had been named with Alcibiades and Lamachus to the command of the projected armament, omitted nothing that prudence could suggest, and patriotism enforce, to deter his countrymen from such a dangerous and fatal design. On this memorable occasion, he threw aside his usual timidity, and divested himself of that rigid regard for established forms, which was natural to his age and character. Though the assembly was convened to determine the proportion of supplies and troops, and the means of collecting them with the greatest expedition and facility, he ventured, contrary to ancient custom, to propose a different subject of debate; affirming, "That the interest of Athens was concerned, not in providing the preparations for the Sicilian invasion, but in re-examining the expediency of the war. The assembly ought not to be moved by the arguments and entreaties of the persecuted Ægesteans, and fugitive Leontines, whom resentment had taught to exaggerate, and misery to deceive. Nor ought the vain phantom of glory and ambition to engage Athens in a design, perhaps altogether impracticable, and in the present juncture, peculiarly unseasonable; since it would be madness to excite the flames of a new war, before the ashes of the old were extinguished. The pleas of danger and self-defence were in the highest degree frivolous; for, should the dreaded power of Syracuse be extended over the whole of Sicily, the Athenians would have nothing to apprehend; this event would rather increase their security. In the actual state of the island, particular cities might be persuaded by fear, or interest, to court the protection of the Peloponnesian confederacy; but the victorious Syracuse would disdain to follow the standard of Sparta. Should the former republic, by an effort of uncommon generosity, subject the partial dictates of her pride to the general safety and honour of the Dorian name, sound policy, however, would still prevent her from endangering the precarious empire which she had obtained over her neighbours, by strengthening the confederacy of

Peloponnesus, of which the avowed design was to give liberty and independence to all Grecian cities. Should every remote view of policy be disregarded, yet immediate fear would deter the Syacusans from provoking the resentment of Athens, the effects of which they had not as yet experienced, but which, being unknown, must appear the more formidable. It was evident, therefore, that the Sicilian expedition might be omitted without danger; but if this enterprise, which had been hastily resolved on, were injudiciously executed, or if any of those misfortunes should happen, which are but too frequent in war, the Athenians would be exposed not only to danger, but to disgrace and ruin. The result of such an important deliberation ought not to be committed to the rash decision of youthful levity; which viewed the Sicilian war, as it did every other object, through the delusive medium of hope, vanity, and ambition; and, totally disregarding the expense and danger to be incurred by the republic, considered only the profits of military command, which might repair the wreck of exhausted fortunes, and supply a new fund for the indulgence of extravagant and licentious pleasures. He had in his eye a youth of that description, the principal author of the expedition, who was surrounded by a numerous band of adherents, determined to applaud his discourse and to promote his measures. It became the wisdom and dignity of the assembly to resist with firmness that juvenile conspiracy. In such a dangerous crisis, it was the duty of the president to dispense with ordinary forms, and to act, not merely as the instrument, but as the physician of a diseased republic. The question ought to be debated a second time; and the Athenians ought to rescind the decree against Sicily, which had passed without sufficient examination, in the absence of several aged and respectable counsellors.*

* Thucyd. l. vi. p. 417, & seqq. The Sicilian expedition is uninterruptedly related through the remainder of the sixth and seventh books of Thucydides. The collateral authority of Diodorus, Plutarch, and the orators, is of little importance.

His discourse answered by Alcibiades.

This discourse immediately called up Alcibiades, who, presuming on his credit with the assembly, acknowledged, "That he had aspired to the command in Sicily, and that he thought himself justly entitled to that honour. The extravagance of which he was accused, had redounded to the profit of his country; since his magnificence at the Olympic games, however it might be traduced by an abusive epithet, had extended the glory of Athens, and deserved the admiration of Greece. His youth and inexperience had effected what the policy of the wisest statesman had often attempted in vain. A powerful confederacy had been formed against Sparta, even in the bosom of the Peloponnesus; and the terror of a domestic foe would long prevent the enmity of that rival state from interrupting the progress of Athenian grandeur. In an expedition, evidently directed to this glorious end, expense and danger ought not to be regarded, since wealth was usefully sacrificed to purchase victory and renown; and power was only to be preserved by seizing favourable opportunities to increase and confirm it. To the undertaking which he advised, no reasonable objection could be made; its expense would be furnished by the Ægeans, and other confederates; and the danger could not be great, as Sicily, however extensive and populous, was inhabited by a promiscuous crowd of various nations, without arms or discipline, devoid of patriotism, and incapable of union."*

Nicias explains the difficulties of the war.

The assembly murmured applause, confirmed their former decree, and testified for the war, greater alacrity than before. Nicias perceived the violence of the popular current; still, however, he made one ineffectual effort to resist its force. "The success of an invader," he observed, "commonly depended on the weight and rapidity of his first unexpected impression, which confirmed the confidence of his friends, and excited dismay and terror in his enemies. If the expedition into Sicily must be undertaken in defiance of every difficulty and danger, it

* Thucyd. p. 422—426.

ought therefore to be carried into execution with the utmost vigour. The Athenians might thus secure the assistance of Naxos and Catana, which were connected by affinity with the Ægesteans and Leontines. But there remained seven cities, and those far more powerful, with which they must prepare to contend; particularly Selinus and Syracuse, places well provided with ships, magazines, cavalry, archers, heavy-armed troops, and every object and resource most useful in defensive war. An armament simply naval would not be sufficient to cope with such a strength. Five thousand pikemen, with a proportional number of archers and cavalry, could not render the invasion successful. After arriving in Sicily, the towns must be besieged or stormed; workmen, with all sorts of machines and implements, must be collected for those purposes, and transported to an island from which, in the four winter months, a messenger could scarcely return to Athens. This necessary train, which would greatly encumber the fleet and army, must be subsisted in a hostile country. Besides an hundred galleys, a great number of tenders and victuallers would be required for the expedition. To collect such an immense mass of war, demanded, doubtless, astonishing ardour and perseverance; but if the Athenians intended to employ a smaller force, he must in justice to his country and himself, decline accepting the command, since nothing less than what he had described could promise a hope of victory, or prevent the certainty of defeat.”*

The last attempt of Nicias to dissuade his countrymen from this fatal enterprise, by magnifying the difficulty of its execution, produced an opposite effect. The obstacles, which were unable to conquer, only animated the courage of the assembly; and it was determined, that the generals should be invested with full authority to raise such sums of money, and to levy such a body of troops, as might ensure success to their arms. The domestic strength of the

The Athenians prepare for invading Sicily.
Olymp. xci. 2.
A. C. 415.

* Thucyd. p. 427—429.

Athenians was unequal to the greatness of the undertaking: proper agents were despatched to demand an extraordinary contribution from their dependant tributaries, as well as to summon the reluctant assistance of their more warlike allies. These auxiliary squadrons were ordered to sail to Corcyra, in which rendezvous the Athenians, towards the middle of the summer, were ready to join their confederates.

The magnitude of their preparations.

The magnitude of the preparations increased the hopes and the ardour of all ranks of men in the republic. The old expected that nothing could resist such a numerous and well-equipped armament.

The young eagerly seized an occasion to gratify their curiosity and love of knowledge in a distant navigation, and to share the honours of such a glorious enterprise. The rich exulted in displaying their magnificence; the poor rejoiced in the immediate assurance of pay sufficient to relieve their present wants,* and in the prospect of obtaining by their arms the materials of future ease and happiness. Instead of finding any difficulty to complete the levies, the great difficulty consisted in deciding the preference of valour and merit among those who solicited to serve; and the whole complement of forces, to be employed by sea and land, consisted of chosen men.†

The general alacrity to embark.

Amidst the general alacrity felt, or at least expressed, by people of all descriptions (for the dread of incurring public censure made several express what they did not feel,) Socrates‡ alone ventured openly and boldly to condemn the expedition, and to predict the future

* The most expert and able seamen received a drachma (seven-pence three farthings) as daily pay, besides donatives from their respective captains. Thucyd. & Plut.

† Thucyd. p. 430—433.

‡ Plutarch joins Meton the Astrologer with Socrates. But the story of Meton, who pretended madness, burned his house, and entreated the Athenians, that, amidst his domestic misfortunes, he might not be deprived of the comfort of his only son, is inconsistent with the narrative of Thucydides, which proves, that instead of compelling reluctance, there was occasion to repress forwardness to embark.

calamities of his country. But the authority of a sage was unable to check the course of that enthusiasm, which had not been interrupted by the anniversary festival of Adonis, an ancient and melancholy rite, which inauspiciously returned a few days preceding the embarkation. During this dreary ceremony, the streets of Athens were crowded with spectres clothed in funeral robes; the spacious domes and temples resounded with lugubrious cries; while the Grecian matrons marching in slow procession, tore their dishevelled hair, beat their naked bosoms, and lamented in mournful strains the untimely death of the lover, and beloved favourite of Venus.*

When the appointed day arrived, the whole inhabitants of Athens, whether citizens or strangers, assembled early in the Piræus, to admire the greatest armament ever collected in a Grecian harbour.

The armament sails from Athens;

An hundred galleys were adorned with all the splendour of naval pomp: the troops destined to embark, vied with each other in the elegance of their dress and the brightness of their arms: the alacrity painted in every face, and the magnificence displayed with profusion in every part of the equipage, represented a triumphal show, rather than the stern image of war. But the solidity and greatness of the armament proved that it was intended for use, not for ostentation. Amidst this glare of external pageantry which accompanied the adventurous youth, their friends and kinsmen could not suppress a few parting tears, when they considered the length of the voyage, the various dangers by flood and field, and the uncertainty of beholding again the dearest pledges of their affections. But these partial expressions of grief were speedily interrupted by the animating sound of the trumpet, which issued at once from an hundred ships, and provoked sympathetic acclamations from the shore. The captains then offered solemn prayers to the gods, which were answered by corresponding vows from the spectators: the customary libations were poured out in goblets of gold and silver; and after the triumphant pæan had

* Plut. in Nic. & Alcibiad.

been sung in full chorus, the whole fleet at once set sail, and contended for the prize of naval skill and celerity, until they reached the lofty shores of Ægina, from whence they enjoyed a prosperous navigation to the rendezvous of their confederates at Corcyra.*

Armament
reviewed at
Corcyra.

At Corcyra the commanders reviewed the strength of the armament which consisted of an hundred and thirty-four ships of war, with a proportional number of transports and tenders. The heavy armed troops, exceeding five thousand, were attended with a competent body of slingers and archers. The army, abundantly provided in every other article, was extremely deficient in horses, which amounted to no more than thirty. But, at a moderate computation, we may estimate the whole military and naval strength, including, slaves and servants, at twenty thousand men.

The Athenians sail
along the coast of
Italy.

With this powerful host, had the Athenians at once surprised and assailed the unprepared security of Syracuse, the expedition, however adventurous and imprudent, might, perhaps, have been crowned with success. But the timid mariners of Greece would have trembled at the proposal of trusting such a numerous fleet on the broad expanse of the Ionian sea. They determined to cross the narrowest passage between Italy and Sicily, after coasting along the eastern shores of the former, until they reached the Strait of Messina. That this design might be executed with the greater safety, they despatched three light vessels to examine the disposition of the Italian cities, and to solicit admission into their harbours. The greatest part of Magna Græcia had, indeed, been peopled by Dorians naturally hostile to Athens. But from one Italian city the Athenians had reason to expect a very favourable reception. The effeminate Sybaris had been demolished, as related above† by the warlike inhabitants of Crotona, about

* Thucyd. l. vi. p. 432, & seqq. Plut in Nicia. Diodor. l. xiii. p. 332.

† P. 35.

the time that the Athenians, growing more powerful than their neighbours, began to seize every opportunity to extend their colonies and their dominion. Governed by such principles, they could not long overlook the happy situation of Sybaris, near to which they early formed an establishment that assumed the name of Thurium, from a salubrious fountain of fresh water;* and the colony was increased by a numerous supply of emigrants, who, under Athenian leaders, sailed from Greece thirteen years before the Peloponnesian war.†

The armament at Corcyra, whatever jealousy its power might create in other cities, was entitled to the gratitude of Thurium; presuming on which the commanders, without waiting the return of the advice-boats, ordered the fleet to proceed, in three divisions, to the Italian coast. But neither the ties of consanguinity, nor the duties acknowledged by colonies towards their parent state, could prevail on the suspicious Thurians to open their gates to the Athenians, even to furnish them with a market. The towns of Tarentum and Locris prohibited them the use of their harbours, and refused to supply them with water; and they coasted the whole extent of the shore, from the promontory of Iapygium to that of Rhegium, before any one city would allow them to purchase the commodities of which they were in want. The magistrates of Rhegium granted this favour, but they granted nothing more; notwithstanding the earnest solicitations, of Alcibiades, and his colleagues, who exhorted them, as a colony of Eubœa, to assist their brethren of Leontium, whose republic the Athenians had determined to re-establish and to defend.‡

Are regarded with suspicion by the Italian cities.

Rhegium alone supplies them with a market.

While the armament continued at Rhegium, they were informed by vessels which had been purposely despatched from Corcyra, that the Ægesteans,

They are informed of the artifice

* *Θρουμαίων ἀπὸ τῆς ἀφ' ἧς θουρίας*. Diodor. l. xii. p. 295.

† Suid. ad voc. *Lysiac*.

‡ Thucyd. p. 443.

of the *Ægesteans*.

They deliberate on the mode of carrying on the war.

notwithstanding the boasted accounts lately given of their riches, possessed only thirty talents in their treasury. This disagreeable intelligence, together with the disappointment of assistance from any Italian city, occasioned a council of war, to consider what measures ought to be pursued in the Sicilian expedition. It was the opinion of Nicias, "that the *Ægesteans* ought to be furnished with that proportion of ships only, the charges of which they were able to defray; and that the Athenian fleet having settled either by arms or by persuasion, the quarrels between them and their neighbours, should return to their own harbours, after sailing along the coast of Sicily, and displaying to the inhabitants of that island both their inclination and their power to protect the weakness of their allies."

Alcibiades declared, "That it would be shameful and ignominious to dissolve such a powerful armament, without performing some exploit worthy the renown of the republic; that, by the prospect of immediate and effectual support, the inferior cities might easily be alienated from their reluctant confederacy with Selinus and Syracuse; after which the war ought to be carried on with the utmost vigour against those republics, unless they re-established the Leontines in their territory, and gave complete satisfaction to the injured *Ægesteans*."

Judicious advice of Lamachus.

Lamachus not only approved the active councils of Alcibiades, but proposed a measure still more enterprising. "The Athenians ought not to waste time in unimportant objects. Instead of striking at the extremities, they ought to assault at once the heart and strength of the enemy. If they immediately attacked Syracuse, it would not only be the first, but the last city, which they would have occasion to besiege. Nor could the attempt fail, if undertaken without delay, before the *Syracusans* had time to recollect themselves, and to provide for their own defence; and while the Athenian troops, as yet undaunted by any check, enjoyed unbroken courage and blooming hopes."

This advice, which does equal honour to the spirit and good sense of Lamachus, was rejected by the timidity of Nicias, and probably by the vanity of Alcibiades. The latter perceived a flattering opportunity of exhausting all the resources of his eloquence and intrigue to get possession of the dependant cities, before he illustrated the glory of his arms in the siege of Syracuse. The fleet sailed from Rhegium to execute *his* plan, which was adopted by his colleagues, as forming the middle between the extremes of their respective opinions. A considerable detachment was sent to examine the preparations and the strength of Syracuse, and to proclaim liberty, and offer protection, to all the captives and strangers confined within its walls.

Advice of
Lamachus
is rejected.

With another detachment Alcibiades sailed to Naxos, and persuaded the inhabitants to accept the alliance of Athens. The remainder of the armament proceeded to Catana, which refused to admit the ships into the harbour, or the troops into the city. But on the arrival of Alcibiades, the Cataneans allowed him to address the assembly, and propose his demands. The artful Athenian transported the populace, and even the magistrates themselves, by the harmony and force of his eloquence; the citizens flocked from every quarter, to hear a discourse which was purposely protracted for several hours; the soldiers forsook their posts; and the enemy, who had prepared to avail themselves of this negligence, burst through the unguarded gates, and became masters of the city. Those of the Cataneans who were most attached to the interestt of Syracuse, fortunately escaped death by the celerity of their flight. The rest accepted the proffered friendship of the Athenians. This success would probably have been followed by the surrender of Messené, which Alcibiades had filled with distrust and sedition. But when the plot was ripe for execution,* the man who had contrived, and who alone

Alcibiades
takes Ca-
tana by
stratagem.

His intri-
gues in
Messené.

* Thucydides says, " When Alcibiades knew that he should be banished, he betrayed his accomplices, to the party favourable to Syracuse, who immediately put them to death." Thucyd. p. 462. We shall see hereafter

could conduct it, was disqualified from serving his country. The arrival of the Salaminian galley recalled Alcibiades to Athens, that he might stand trial for his life.

He is un-
seasonably
recalled to
Athens.

It would be improper to suspend the course of an interesting narrative, by describing the causes and circumstances of this unexpected event, if they were not immediately connected with the subsequent history of the Sicilian expedition, and with the future fortune of the Athenians, who, after engaging, by the advice of one man, in the most romantic schemes of conquest which the madness of ambition had ever dared to entertain, injudiciously arrested the activity of that man in the execution of such extraordinary designs, as offered no chance of success but in the wonderful resources of his singular and eccentric genius. It happened, that on the night preceding

The cause
of his recall.

the intended navigation to Sicily, all the statues of Mercury, which had been erected in the Athenian streets, as the boundaries of different edifices and tenements, were thrown down, broken, and defaced. One only image of the god, of uncommon size and beauty, was saved from the general wreck; it was afterwards called the statue of Andocides, as it stood before the house of the Athenian orator of that name. This daring insult was first ascribed to the wicked artifices of the Corinthians, who, it was supposed, might employ such an abominable and sacrilegious contrivance, to deter the Athenian armament from sailing against their colony and kinsmen of Syracuse. But the enemies of Alcibiades availed themselves of the impious levity* of his character, to direct

still more fatal consequences of his resentment against his country. But nothing can more strongly test the turpitude of his character.

* Democritus, the chief promoter of the Atomic philosophy, was younger than Anaxagoras, and elder than Socrates. His scholars, Diagoras and Protagoras, propagated his wild system at Athens, towards the commencement of the Peloponnesian war. Whether Alcibiades embraced the barren doctrines of that miserable sect, or adhered to the divine philosophy of his master Socrates, or, more probably, fluctuated between them, he must, in all cases alike, have been obnoxious to the suspicion of impiety. Comp. Strabo, l. lxxv. p. 703. Sext. Empiric. l. lix. 11. Laert. l. ii. in Democrit. Socrat. & Protag.

the popular storm against the head of their detested foe. On the evidence of slaves, he was accused of having treated, with rude familiarity, other adored images of the gods; and Thesalus, the degenerate son of the magnanimous Cimon, impeached him of impiety towards the goddesses Ceres and Proserpine, whose awful ceremonies he had polluted and profaned; assuming, though uninitiated, the names and robes of the high priest, calling Polytion (in whose house this scandalous scene had been represented) the torch-bearer, Theodorus the herald, and treating his other licentious companions as sacred brethren and holy ministers of those mysterious rites.*

Such an atrocious accusation alarmed the terrors of the Athenians; one assembly was summoned after another; and the panic became the more general, when it was understood that, during the same night in which the statues had been mutilated, a body of Peloponnesian troops had marched towards the isthmus of Corinth. In the confused imagination of the vulgar, it was possible to unite the incompatible interests of superstition and of freedom; and they were persuaded by Androcles, and other artful demagogues, that the profanation of the mysteries, the defacing of the statues of Mercury, the movement of the Peloponnesian troops, all announced a conspiracy to demolish the established form of popular government, the safety of which had, ever since the expulsion of the Pisistratidæ, formed an object of universal and most anxious solicitude.

He is charged with impiety and treason.
Olymp.
xci. 2.
A. C. 415.

Alcibiades defended himself, with his usual eloquence and address, against the malignity of a charge unsupported by any adequate evidence.

The artifices of his accusers.

The soldiers and sailors, whose eagerness already grasped the conquest of Sicily, interceded for the deliverance of their commander, whom they regarded as the soul of that glorious enterprise. A thousand Argives and Mantinæans who had enlisted on this occasion, under the Athenian banners, declared their unwillingness to sail, unless they were accompa-

* Plutarch. in Alcibiad.

nied by Alcibiades, whose valour and abilities alone had determined them to engage in such an important but dangerous service. This powerful combination in his favour disappointed the present hopes, without disconcerting the future measures of his enemies. They perceived that, were he brought to an immediate trial, it would be impossible to obtain sentence against him ; but that, were his person and influence removed to a distance from Athens, every thing might be hoped from the weakness, inconstancy, and credulity of the populace. It was therefore determined by this perfidious cabal, that such orators as had hitherto disguised, under the mask of friendship or admiration, their envy and hatred of Alcibiades, should declare in full assembly, "that it would be inconsistent with the clearest dictates of prudence and propriety, to involve in the tedious formalities of a judicial procedure, a citizen who had been elected general by the unanimous suffrage of his country, and whose presence was eagerly demanded by the affectionate ardour of his troops. The charges against him deserved, doubtless to be seriously examined ; but the present was not a proper time for such an investigation, which must blunt the courage of his followers, and interrupt the service of the republic. Let him sail therefore for Sicily, and at his return home he will either vindicate his innocence, or suffer the punishment of his guilt." Alcibiades perceived the poison concealed under this affected lenity, and testified his reluctance to leave behind him such abundant materials for the malice of informers. But his petition for an immediate trial was rejected by the assembly. He therefore set sail, probably flattering himself, that by the glory and success of his arms, he would silence the clamours, at least defeat the machinations of his accusers.

Favoured
by popular
delusion.

But this expectation was unfortunately disappointed. In a republican government, it is not more easy to excite than it is difficult to appease, the fermentation of public discontents, especially if occasioned by any real or pretended diminution of freedom. The removal of Alcibiades gave full scope to the ebullitions of popular

frenzy. The Athenians were continually assembled to inquire into the violation of the statues. Many respectable citizens were seized on suspicion, because they had, on former occasions, discovered principles hostile to the wild extravagance of democracy. Others were imprisoned on the evidence of Teucer, an obscure stranger, and Diopeithes, a calumnious demagogue. The violence of the public disorder opened a door to private vengeance. Every individual was desirous to see his personal enemies among the number of state criminals: and his resentment was invited falsely to accuse them, by an injudicious decree of the assembly, offering high rewards to those who should denounce the guilty, and even to the guilty themselves, who should denounce their associates.

Among the persons who had been seized on suspicion, was the crafty and intriguing Timæus, and the profligate and impious Andocides, the same whose statue of Mercury had escaped the general mutilation. The known character of these men naturally marked them out as peculiar victims of popular fury. As they were confined in the same prison, they had an opportunity of communicating their apprehensions, and of contriving means of safety. Timæus persuaded his friend, (for the ties of common danger create between knaves a temporary friendship,) that it would be weakness to die by a false accusation, when he might save himself by a lie. Andocides turned informer. The prisoners whom he named were banished or put to death. The rest were set at liberty. The absent, among whom was Alcibiades, were recalled to stand trial. But they did not obey the summons sent them by the Salaminian galley. The wanderings and misfortunes of more obscure names are unknown. Alcibiades escaped to Thurium, and afterwards to Argos; and when he understood that the Athenians had set a price on his head, he finally took refuge in Sparta; where his active genius seized the first opportunity to advise and promote those fatal measures, which, while

Alcibiades
escapes to
Sparta.
Olymp.
xci. 2.
A. C. 415.

they gratified his private resentment, occasioned the ruin of his country.*

Languid
operations
in Sicily.

The removal of Alcibiades soon appeared in the languid operations of the Athenian armament. The cautious timidity of Nicias, supported by wealth, eloquence and authority, gained an absolute ascendant over the more warlike and enterprising character of Lamachus, whose poverty exposed him to contempt. Instead of making a bold impression on Selinus or Syracuse, Nicias contented himself with taking possession of the unimportant colony of Hyccara. He ravaged, or laid under contribution some places of smaller note, and obtained thirty talents from the Ægesteans, which, added to the sale of the booty, furnished about thirty thousand pounds sterling,† a sum that might be usefully employed in the prosecution of an expensive war. But this advantage did not compensate for the courage inspired into the Syracusans by delay, and for the dishonour sustained by the Athenian troops, in their unsuccessful attempts against Hybla and Himera, as well as for their dejection at being confined, during the greatest part of the summer, in the inactive quarters of Naxos and Catana.

Nicias de-
termines to
attack Sy-
racuse.

The impatience of the Athenians murmured against those dilatory and ignoble proceedings, which appeared altogether unsuited to the greatness of their armament, the generous spirit with which they felt themselves animated, and the ancient glory of the republic. Nicias, resisting the wary dictates of his own fear or foresight, determined to gratify the inclination of his troops, by the vigour of his winter campaign. The con-

* Plut. in Alcibiad. & Isocrates, and Lysias, in the Orations for and against the son of Alcibiades. Several facts and circumstances are differently represented in the orations of Andocides; but that orator was a party concerned, and his misrepresentation of the best attested facts leaves him no credit in those that are more powerful.

† Thirty talents from the Ægesteans, amount to	-	-	£ 5,812
The sale of slaves, &c.	-	-	23,250

Sum £ 29,062

quest of Syracuse, against which he intended to lead them, might well excite the emulation of the combatants, since that powerful city formed the main obstacle to their ambition, and the principal bulwark not only of Sicily, but of the Italian and African shores.

Ancient Syracuse, of which the ruined grandeur is still worthy of regard, was situate on a spacious promontory, washed on three sides by the sea, and defended on the west by abrupt and almost inaccessible mountains. The town was built in a triangular form, whose summit may be conceived at the lofty mountains Epipolé. Adjacent to these natural fortifications, the western or inland division of the city was distinguished by the name of Tycha, or Fortune, being adorned by a magnificent temple of that flattering divinity. The triangle gradually widening towards the base, comprehended the vast extent of Achradina, reaching from the northern shore of the promontory to the southern island Ortygia. This small island, composing the whole of modern Syracuse, formed but the third and least extensive division of the ancient; which was fortified by walls eighteen miles in circuit, enriched by a triple harbour, and peopled by above two hundred thousand warlike citizens, or industrious slaves.*

Description
of that city.

When the Syracusans heard the first rumours of the Athenian invasion, they despised, or affected to despise them, as idle lies invented to amuse the ignorance of the populace. The hostile armament had arrived at Rhegium before they could be persuaded by the wisdom of Hermocrates, to provide against a danger which their presumption painted as imaginary. But when they received undoubted intelligence that the enemy had reached the Italian coast; when they beheld his numerous fleet commanding the sea of Sicily, and ready to make a descent on their defenceless island, they were seized with a degree of just terror and alarm proportional to their false security. They condemned their former incredulity and indifference, which had been nourished

Temper of
the Syracu-
sans.

* Strabo, p. 266, & seqq. & Thucydid. passim. l. vi.

by the interested adulation of the demagogue Athenagoras, who vainly assured them that the strength of Syracuse was sufficient not only to defy the assaults, but to restrain the attempts of any Grecian foe. From the heights of presumption, they plunged into the depths of despair, and their spirits were, with difficulty, restored by the animating voice of Hermocrates, who was not more prudent in prosperity than intrepid in danger.*

By his exhortations they were encouraged to make ready their arms, to equip their fleet, to strengthen their garrisons, and to summon the assistance of their allies. These measures were undertaken with ardour, and carried on with unremitting activity; and the dilatory operations of the enemy not only removed the recent terror and trepidation of the Syracusans, but inspired them with unusual firmness. They requested the generals, whom they had appointed to the number of fifteen, to lead them to Catana, that they might attack the hostile camp. Their cavalry harassed the Athenians by frequent incursions, beat up their quarters, intercepted their convoys, destroyed their advanced posts, and even proceeded so near to the main body, that they were distinctly heard demanding with loud insults, Whether those boasted lords of Greece had left their native country, that they might form a precarious settlement at the foot of Mount Ætna?†

Stratagem
of Nicias for
getting pos-
session of
Syracuse.

Provoked by these indignities, and excited by the impatient resentment of his own troops, Nicias was still restrained from an open attack on Syracuse by the difficulties attending that enterprise. The distance between Catana and the Sicilian capital was more than thirty miles; but, after the most prosperous voyage, the Athenians could not expect, without extreme danger, to make a descent on the fortified coast of a

* Thucyd. p. 436, & seqq.

† Plutarch. The sneer is differently expressed in Thucydides: "Whether they had not come to gain a settlement for themselves in a *foreign* country, rather than to replace the Leontines in *their own*?" Thucyd. p. 455.

powerful and vigilant enemy. If they determined to march by land, they must be harassed by the numerous cavalry of Syracuse, which actually watched their motions, and with whose activity, in a broken and intricate country, the strength of heavy-armed troops was exceedingly ill-qualified to contend. To avoid both inconveniences, Nicias employed a stratagem. A citizen of Catana, whose subtle and daring genius, prepared alike to die or to deceive, ought to have preserved his name from oblivion, appeared in Syracuse as a deserter from his native city; the unhappy fate of which, in being subjected to the imperious commands, or licentious disorder of the Athenians, he lamented with perfidious tears, and with the plaintive accents of well-dissembled sorrow. "*He* was not the only man who bewailed, with filial compassion, the misfortunes and ignominy of his country. A numerous body of Cataneans, whose resentment was repressed by fear, longed to take up arms, that they might deliver themselves from a disgraceful yoke, and punish the cruel tyranny of the invaders. Nor could the design fail of success, if Syracuse should second their generous ardour. The Athenians, so liberally endowed with courage and ambition, were destitute of wisdom and of discipline. They spurned the restraints of a military life; their posts were forsaken, their ships unguarded; they disdained the duties of the camp, and indulged in the pleasures of the city. On an appointed day it would be easy for the Syracusans, assisted by the conspirators of Catana, to attack them unprepared, to mount their undefended ramparts, to demolish their encampment, and to burn their fleet." This daring proposal well corresponded with the keen sentiments of revenge which animated the inhabitants of Syracuse. The day was named; the plan of the enterprise was concerted, and the treacherous Catanean returned home to revive the hopes, and to confirm the resolution, of his pretended associates.

The success of this intrigue gave the utmost satisfaction to Nicias, whose armament prepared to sail for Syracuse on the day appointed by the inhabitants of that city for assaulting, with their

Fails
through the
activity of
the Syracu-
sans.

whole force, the Athenian camp. Already had they marched with this view, to the fertile plain of Leontium, when, after twelve hours sail, the Athenian fleet arrived in the great harbour, disembarked their troops, and fortified a camp without the western wall, near to the celebrated temple of Olympian Jupiter; a situation which had been pointed out by some Syracusan exiles, and which was well adapted to every purpose of accommodation and defence. Meanwhile the cavalry of Syracuse, proceeding to the walls of Catana, had discovered, to their infinite regret, the departure of the Athenians. The unwelcome intelligence was conveyed, with the utmost expedition, to the infantry, who immediately marched back to protect Syracuse. The rapid return of the warlike youth restored the courage of the aged Syracusans. They were joined by the forces of Gela, Selinus, and Camarina; and it was determined, without loss of time, to attack the hostile encampment.”*

Nicias defeats the Syracusans in a battle. Olymp. xci. 2. A. C. 415.

Only a few days elapsed before the Athenians gave them a fairer opportunity of revenge. The two armies prepared to engage, respectively inflamed by resentment and ambition; the one formidable from courage and numbers, the other elated by superior discipline and habitual victory. The Syracusan generals drew up their troops, sixteen, and the Athenians only eight, deep: but the latter had, in their camp, a body of reserve, which was kept ready for action on the first signal. Nicias went round the ranks, exhorting his soldiers by a short discourse, in which he observed, “that the strength of their present preparations was better fitted to inspire confidence, than the most eloquent speech with a weak army, especially as they contended against the Syracusans, a promiscuous crowd, whose presumption was founded on inexperience, and whose desultory ardour, however successful in predatory incursions, would yield to the first shock of regular war. They fought, indeed, in defence of their city; so did the Athenians and their allies, whom nothing but military valour and success

* Thucyd. p. 445—457.

could restore in safety to their respective countries.”* Having thus spoken, he led his troops to the enemy, who did not decline the engagement. The light-armed archers† skirmished in the van; the priests brought forth the accustomed sacrifices; the trumpets summoned for a general charge.

The attack was begun with fury, and continued with perseverance for several hours. Both sides were animated by every principle that can inspire and urge the utmost vigour of exertion, and victory was still doubtful, when a tempest suddenly arose, accompanied with unusual peals of thunder. This event, which little affected the Athenians, confounded the unexperienced credulity of the enemy, who were broken and put to flight. Nicias restrained the eagerness of his men in the pursuit, lest they should be exposed to danger from a body of twelve hundred Syracusan cavalry, who had not engaged in the battle, but who impatiently watched an opportunity to assault the disordered phalanx. The Syracusans escaped to their city, and the Athenians returned to their camp. In such an obstinate conflict, the vanquished lost two hundred and sixty, the victors only fifty men; numbers that might occasion much surprise, if we reflected not that, to oppose the offensive weapons used by antiquity, the warriors of Greece (in every circumstance so unlike the miserable and naked peasants of modern Europe whose lives are sacrificed without defence, as without remorse, to the ambition of men whom the Greeks would have styled tyrants) being armed with the helmet and cuirass, the ample buckler, the firm corslet, and the manly greaves, they often displayed their skill, their courage, and their love of liberty, at a very small expense of human blood.

The voyage, the encampment, and the battle, employed the dangerous activity, and gratified the

Cause of
their defeat.

The Athe-
nians return

* Thucyd. p. 458 & 459.

† Thucydides mentions, besides the archers (τοξοται), the λιθοβολοι and σφενδονηται, “the throwers of stones and slingers.” P. 449. They were all φηλοι, as he says immediately below.

to Catana
and Naxos.

impetuous ardour of the Athenians, but did not facilitate the conquest of Syracuse. Without more powerful preparations, Nicias despaired of taking the place either by assault, or by a regular siege. Soon after his victory, he returned with the whole armament to Naxos and Catana; a measure which sufficiently proves that the late enterprise had been undertaken, not in consequence of any permanent system of operations formed by the general, but in compliance with the ungovernable* temper of his troops, whose principles of military subordination were confined to the field of battle.

* Without attending to this circumstance, the conduct of Grecian generals must, on many occasions, appear altogether unaccountable. The same observation applies to modern history preceding the peace of Munster. The famous war of thirty years, which ended at that peace, laid the great foundation for the exact military subordination which distinguishes the present century. See Pere Bougeant, *Histoire de la Guerre de 30 Ans*.

CHAP. XX.

Preparations for the ensuing Campaign.—The Athenians begin the Siege with Vigour.—Distress and Sedition in Syracuse.—Arrival of Gylippus—who defeats the Athenians.—Transactions in Greece.—A second Armament arrives at Syracuse.—Its first operations successful.—The Athenians defeated.—Prepare to raise the Siege.—Naval engagement in the Great Harbour.—Despondency of the Athenians.—Stratagem of Hermocrates.—The Athenians raise their Camp.—Melancholy firmness of Nicias.—Demosthenes Capitulates.—Nicias Surrenders.—Cruel Treatment of the Athenian Captives.—Singular Exception.

NICIAS had reason to hope that his victory over the Syracusans would procure him respect and assistance from the inferior states of Sicily. His emissaries were diffused over that island and the neighbouring coast of Italy. Messengers were sent to Tuscany, where Pisa and other cities had been founded by Greek colonies.* An embassy was despatched to Carthage, the rival and enemy of Syracuse. Nicias gave orders to collect materials for circumvallation; iron, bricks, and all necessary stores. He demanded horses from the Ægesteans; and required from Athens reinforcements, and a large pecuniary supply; neglecting nothing that might enable him to open the ensuing campaign with vigour and effect.†

Nicias prepares for the ensuing campaign.
xci. 2.
A. C. 416.

* Strabo, p. 243, & p. 283, & seqq.

† It is remarkable, that though Nicias, after the removal of Alcibiades, enjoyed the principal, or rather sole command of the army, he acted quite contrary to the opinion which he had declared at the commencement of the expedition. The plan which he pursued was that of Alcibiades, not his own: the views of the banished general still actuated the army; but the ardent spirit was withdrawn, that could alone afford the hope of success.

The Syracusans prepare for defence.

While the Athenians thus prepared for the attack of Syracuse, the citizens of that capital displayed equal activity in providing for their own defence. By the advice of Hermocrates, they appointed *himself*, Heraclides, and Sicanus; three, instead of fifteen generals. The commanders newly elected, both in civil and military affairs, were invested with unlimited power, which was usefully employed to purchase or prepare arms, daily to exercise the troops, and to strengthen and extend the fortifications of Syracuse. They likewise despatched ambassadors to the numerous cities and republics with which they had been connected in peace, or allied in war, to solicit the continuance of their friendship, and to counteract the dangerous designs of the Athenians.

Both parties court the friendship of the Camerineans.
Olymp.
xci. 2.
A. C. 415.

The importance of the city Camerina, situate on the southern coast of Sicily, demanded the presence of Hermocrates himself. The Camerineans had given a very feeble and reluctant assistance to their allies of Syracuse; and the orator Euphemus employed all the weight of his abilities to unite them to the Athenian confederacy. An assembly being summoned, Hermocrates informed them, "That a desire to prevent the deception of the Camerineans, not the dread of the Athenian power, had occasioned his present journey. That restless and ambitious nation, which had so often kindled the flames of war on the continent of Greece, had lately sailed to Sicily, under pretence of re-establishing the affairs of the Leontines and the Ægesteans, but from motives far more selfish, which it was easy to conjecture, and impossible to mistake. Their real and principal design was to sow dissension and disagreement among the Sicilian states, which, fighting singly, might be successively subdued. How could effrontery affirm, or simplicity believe, that the Athenians should undertake a voyage to vindicate the freedom of Ægesta; they who oppressed, with all the rigours of slavery, the unhappy islanders of Eubœa, by whom Ægesta had been built, and

Arguments of the Syracusans.

from whom its inhabitants were descended! Under pretence of delivering from the tyranny of the Great King, the Greeks of Asia, of the Hellespont, of Thrace, and of the Ægæan, they had conquered and enslaved those various countries. They actually employed the same perfidious contrivance against the safety of the Sicilians; but he trusted that their present undertaking, though carried on with equal artifice, would be attended with very different success; and that they would learn by fatal experience, to distinguish between the effeminate Ionians and Hellespontines, whose minds had been enfeebled and debased by the Persian yoke, and the magnanimous Dorians of Sicily, the genuine offspring of Peloponnesus, the source of valour and of liberty.”*

Euphemus, the Athenian, repelled with force and spirit, these reproachful accusations. “The colonies of Athens were kept in a dependence, not less advantageous to themselves than honourable to the parent state. The general interest of Greece required that the same republic which at first had so bravely established, should still continue to maintain, the national independence. They who afford protection, must assume authority; but this authority the Athenians had exerted in a manner essential to their own and to the public safety. If they had subjected the neighbouring coasts and islands, their *interest* might justify that odious but necessary measure; and the same dictates of sound policy which induced them to conquer and to enslave the Hellespontine and Asiatic Greeks, would engage them to emancipate and to deliver the oppressed Sicilians. To this office they were invited by the Leontines and Ægesteans; to this duty they were prompted by the ties of friendship and consanguinity; to this enterprise they were determined by the strongest of all motives, a well-grounded fear lest the inhabitants of Sicily (whose numbers and distance rendered it impossible for Athens to subdue, far less to retain them in subjection) should fall a prey to the watchful encroachments of Syracuse, and thus

Of the
Athenians.

* Thucyd. l. vi. p. 463, & seqq.

become an accession to the Peloponnesian confederacy." The Camerineans dreaded the distant ambition of Athens, but dreaded still more the neighbouring hostility of Syracuse.

The Camerineans determine to observe neutrality.

Their fears dictated a reply in friendly and respectful terms; but they craved leave to preserve a neutrality between the contending powers, hoping by this expedient, to divert the resentment of either, yet to defeat the designs of both.

The Athenians are reinforced, and begin the siege with vigour. Olymp. xci. 3. A. C. 414.

Meanwhile the expected reinforcements arrived from Athens. In addition to his original force, Nicias had likewise collected a body of six hundred cavalry, and the sum of four hundred talents; and, in the eighteenth summer of the war, the activity of the troops and workmen had completed all necessary preparations for undertaking the siege of

Syracuse. The Athenian armament enjoyed a prosperous voyage to the northern harbour of Trogilé, and the troops were no sooner disembarked than they seized an opportunity for signalizing their valour against a body of seven hundred men, who marched to reinforce the garrison of Labdalus; an important fortress situate on the highest of the mountains which overlook and command the city. Three hundred Syracusans were killed in the pursuit; the rest took refuge behind their walls; the castle of Labdalus was taken, and strongly guarded by the victors. The plan which Nicias embraced for conquering the city, was to draw a wall on either side from the neighbourhood of Labdalus, towards the port of Trogilé on the north, and towards a bay two leagues in circumference, justly called the Great Harbour, on the south. When these circumvallations had surrounded the place by land, he expected, by his numerous fleet, to block up the wide extent of the Syracusan harbours. The whole strength of the Athenian armament was vigorously directed to this service; and, as all necessary materials had been provided with due attention, the works rose with a rapidity which surprised and terrified the besieged. Their former, as well as their recent defeat, deterred them from opposing the enemy in a general

engagement; but the advice of Hermocrates persuaded them to raise walls, which might traverse and interrupt those of the Athenians.* The imminent danger urged the captivity of the workmen; the hostile bulwarks approached each other; frequent skirmishes ensued, in one of which the brave Lamachus unfortunately fell a victim to his rash valour;† but the Athenian troops maintained their usual superiority.

Encouraged by success, Nicias pushed the enemy with vigour. The Syracusans lost hopes of defending their new works, or of preventing the complete circumvallation of their city; and this despair was increased by the abundant supplies which arrived from all quarters to the besiegers, while the interest of Syracuse seemed to be universally abandoned by the indifference or cowardice of her allies. In the turbulent democracies of Greece, the moment of public danger commonly gave the signal for domestic sedition. The populace clamoured with their usual licentiousness, against the incapacity or perfidy of their leaders, to whom alone they ascribed their misfortunes. New generals were named in the room of Hermocrates and his colleagues; and this injudicious change increased the calamities of Syracuse, which at length prepared to capitulate.‡

Distress and
sedition in
Syracuse.

While the assembly deliberated concerning the execution of a measure, which, however disgraceful, was declared to be necessary, a Corinthian galley, commanded by Gongylus, entered the central harbour of Ortygia, which being strongly fortified, and penetrating into the heart of the city, served as the principal and most secure station for the Syracusan fleet. The news immediately reached the assembly, and all ranks of men eagerly crowded around Gongylus the Corinthian, that they might learn the cause of his voyage, and the intentions of their Peloponnesian allies. Gongylus announced a speedy and effectual relief to

The Syra-
cusans un-
expectedly
relieved by
their Pelo-
ponnesian
allies.
Olymp.
xci. 3:
A. C. 414.

* Thucyd. l. vi. p. 482, & seqq.

† Plutarch. in Nicia.

‡ Thucyd. p. 487.

the besieged city.* He acquainted the Syracusans, that the embassy, sent the preceding year, to crave the assistance of Peloponnesus, had been crowned with success. His own countrymen had warmly embraced the cause of their kinsmen, and most respectable colony. They had fitted out a considerable fleet, the arrival of which might be expected every hour. The Lacedæmonians, also, had sent a small squadron, and the whole armament was conducted by the Spartan Gylippus, an officer of tried valour and ability.

While the desponding citizens of Syracuse listened to this intelligence with pleasing astonishment, a messenger arrived by land from Gylippus himself. That experienced commander, instead of pursuing a direct course to Sicily, which might have been intercepted by the Athenian fleet, had landed with four galleys on the western coast of the island. The name of a Spartan general determined the wavering irresolution of the Sicilians. The troops of Himera, Selinus, and Gela, flocked to his standard; and he approached Syracuse on the side of Epipolé, where the line of contravallation was still unfinished, with a body of several thousand men.

who defeats
the Athe-
nians.

The most courageous of the citizens sallied forth to meet this generous and powerful protector. The junction was happily effected; the ardour of the troops kindled into enthusiasm; and they distinguished that memorable day by surprising several important Athenian posts. This first success re-animated the activity of the soldiers and workmen. The traverse wall was extended with the utmost diligence, and a vigorous sally deprived the enemy of the strong castle of Labdalus. Nicias perceiving that the interest of the Athenians in Sicily would be continually weakened by delay, wished to bring the fortune of the war to the decision of a battle. Nor did Gylippus decline the engagement. The first action was unfavourable to the Syracusans, who had been imprudently posted in the defiles be-

* Thucyd. p. 490.

tween their own and the enemy's walls, which rendered of no avail their superiority in cavalry and archers. The magnanimity of Gylippus acknowledged this error, for which he completely atoned by his judicious conduct in the immediately succeeding engagement. His forces were drawn up in a more spacious ground. The pikemen received the shock of the enemy's front. The horses and light armed troops assailed and harassed their undefended flanks. The Athenians were thrown into disorder, repulsed, and pursued to their camp with considerable loss, and with irreparable disgrace.

The important consequences of this victory appeared in the subsequent events of the siege. The Syracusans soon extended their works beyond the line of circumvallation, so that it was impossible to block up their city, without forcing their ramparts. The besiegers, while they maintained the superiority of their arms, had been abundantly supplied with necessaries from the neighbouring territory; but every place was alike hostile to them after their defeat. The soldiers, who went out in quest of wood and water, were unexpectedly attacked and cut off by the enemy's cavalry, or by the reinforcements which arrived from every quarter to the assistance of Syracuse; and they were at length reduced to depend, for every necessary supply, on the precarious bounty of the Italian shore.

Consequences of the victory.

Nicias, whose sensibility deeply felt the public distress, wrote a most desponding letter to the Athenians. He honestly described, and lamented, the misfortunes and disorders of his army. The slaves deserted in great numbers; the mercenary troops, who fought only for pay and subsistence, preferred the more secure and lucrative service of Syracuse; even the Athenian citizens, disgusted with the unexpected length and intolerable hardships of the war, abandoned the care of the galleys to unexperienced hands; an abuse too easily permitted by the captains, whose weakness and partiality had corrupted the discipline, and ruined the strength, of the fleet. Nicias frankly acknowledged his inability to check the disorder; observing, that he wrote to

Nicias demands a reinforcement from Athens.

those who knew the difficulty of governing the licentious spirit of their domestic troops. He therefore exhorted the assembly, either to call them home without delay, or to send immediately a second armament, not less powerful than the first.

Gylippus and Hermocrates (for the latter had again assumed the authority due to his abilities) were acquainted with the actual distress, as well as the future hopes of the besiegers, who might derive, in consequence of Nicias' letter, more

effectual succours from Attica than the besieged city could expect from Peloponnesus. They were prompted by interest, therefore, as well as by inclination, to press the enemy on every side, and at once to assail them by sea and land. Besides the bad condition of the Athenian fleet, the absence of a considerable number of galleys employed in conducting the convoys of provisions, encouraged this resolution. The Corinthian squadron of twelve sail, long expected with anxiety, had escaped the dangers of a winter's voyage; and at the commencement of the ensuing spring, the harbours of Syracuse were crowded with the whole naval strength of Sicily. Hermocrates persuaded his countrymen, "that the advantages of skill and experience, which he honestly ascribed to the Athenians, could not compensate their terror and confusion at being suddenly attacked by a superior force, on an element which they affected to command. Athens had assumed this boasted empire of the sea in repelling the invasion of Persia. Syracuse had a similar, yet stronger motive; and as she possessed greater power, was entitled to expect more distinguished success."

Alternate
success.

The principal squadrons of Syracuse lay in the harbour of Ortygia, separated by the island of that name, from the station of the Athenian fleet. While Hermocrates sailed forth with eighty galleys, to venture a naval engagement, Gylippus attacked the hostile fortifications at Plemmyrium, a promontory opposite to Ortygia, which confined the entrance of the Great Harbour. The defeat of the

Syracusans at sea, whereby they lost fourteen vessels, was balanced by their victory at land, in which they took three fortresses, containing a large quantity of military and naval stores, and a considerable sum of money. In some subsequent actions, which scarcely deserve the name of battles, their fleet was still unsuccessful; but as they engaged with great caution, and found every where a secure retreat on a friendly shore, their loss was inconsiderable. Their want of success, in their first attempt, did not abate their resolution to gain the command at sea. The hopes of defending their country sharpened their invention, and animated their activity. They could not, indeed, contend with the Athenians in the rapidity of naval evolution, or in the skill of seamanship; but in the destined scene of action, there was little opportunity for displaying those advantages; and by strengthening, with unremitting labour, the prows of their ships, they compensated, by superior weight, the defect of velocity. They provided also a great number of small vessels, which might approach so near the hostile fleet, that the light armed troops with which they were filled could aim their darts against the Athenian mariners.

By unexampled assiduity in completing these preparations, the Syracusans at length prevailed in a general engagement, which was fought in the Great Harbour. Seven Athenian ships were sunk, many more were disabled, and Nicias saved the remains of his shattered and dishonoured armament, by retiring behind a line of merchantmen and transports, from the masts of which had been suspended huge masses of lead, named dolphins, from their form, sufficient to crush, by their falling weight, the stoutest galleys of antiquity. This unexpected obstacle arrested the progress of the victors; but their preceding advantages elevated them with the highest hopes, and reduced the vanquished to despair.

The Athenians defeated at sea

The Athenian misfortunes in Sicily were attended by misfortunes at home still more dreadful.

Transactions in Greece.

Olymp.
xci. 3.
A. C. 414.

In the eighteenth year of the war, Alcibiades accompanied to Sparta the ambassadors of Corinth and Syracuse, who had solicited and obtained assistance to the besieged city. On that occasion, the Athenian exile first acquired the confidence of the Spartans, by condemning, in the strongest terms, the injustice and ambition of his ungrateful countrymen, "whose cruelty towards himself equalled their inveterate hostility to the Lacedæmonian republic; but this republic might, by following his advice, disarm their resentment. The town of Decelia was situate on the Attic frontier, at an equal distance of fifteen miles from Thebes and Athens. This place, which commanded an extensive and fertile plain, might be surprised and fortified by the Spartans,* who, instead of harassing their foes by annual excursions, might thus infest them by a continual war. The wisdom of Sparta, had too long neglected such a salutary and decisive measure, especially as the existence of a similar design had often been suggested by the fears of the enemy, who trembled even at the apprehension of seeing a foreign garrison in their territory.

The Peloponnesians
raise a fortress in
Attica.
Olymp.
xci. 4.
A. C. 413.

This advice, first proposed, and often urged, by Alcibiades, was adopted in the commencement of the ensuing spring, when the warlike Agis led a powerful army into Attica. The defenceless inhabitants of the frontier fled before his irresistible arms; but instead of pursuing them, as usual, into the heart of the country, he stopped short at Decelia. As all necessary materials had been provided in great abundance, the place was speedily fortified on every side, and the walls of Decelia, which might be distinctly seen across the intermediate plain, bid defiance to those of Athens.†

* The Athenians, with their usual imprudence, facilitated the success of Alcibiades' intrigues. At the time when they ought, if possible, to have soothed, they exasperated the Spartans to the utmost, by frequent incursions from Pylus, and by openly assisting the Argives. Thucyd. l. vi. sub fine.

† Thucyd. p. 500, & seqq.

The latter city was kept in continual alarm by the watchful hostility of a neighbouring garrison. The open country was entirely laid waste, and the usual communication was interrupted with the valuable island of Eubœa, from which, in seasons of scarcity, or during the ravages of war, the Athenians commonly derived their supplies of corn, wine, and oil, and whatever is most necessary to life. Harassed by the fatigues of unremitting service, and deprived of daily bread, the slaves murmured, complained, and revolted to the enemy; and their defection robbed the state of twenty thousand useful artisans. Since the latter years of Pericles, the Athenians had not been involved in such distress. But their present were far more grievous than their past sufferings. Those had been chiefly occasioned by the temporary rage of the pestilence, the abatement of which there was always reason to expect; but these were inflicted by the unextinguishable hatred of a cruel and unrelenting foe.*

The miserable state of that country.

The domestic calamities of the republic did not, however, prevent the most vigorous exertions abroad. Twenty galleys, stationed at Naupactus, watched the motions of the Peloponnesian fleet destined to the assistance of Syracuse: thirty carried on the war in Macedonia, to reduce the rebellion of Amphipolis; a considerable squadron collected tribute, and levied soldiers, in the colonies of Asia; another, still more powerful, ravaged the coast of Peloponnesus. Never did any kingdom or republic equal the magnanimity of Athens; never, in ancient or modern times, did the courage of any state entertain an ambition so far superior to its power, or exert efforts so disproportionate to its strength. Amidst the difficulties and dangers which encompassed them on every side, the Athenians persisted in the siege of Syracuse, a city little inferior to their own; and, undaunted by the actual devastation of their country, unterrified by the menaced assault of their walls, they sent, without delay, such a reinforcement into Sicily, as af-

The Athenians exert great vigour in the midst of their calamities.

* Thucyd. p. 500, & seqq.

forded the most promising hopes of success in their expedition against that island.*

The Athenian armament, commanded by Demosthenes, arrives at Syracuse. Olymp. xci. 4. A. C. 413.

The Syracusans had scarcely time to rejoice at their victory, or Nicias to bewail his defeat, when a numerous and formidable armament appeared on the Sicilian coast. The foremost galleys, their prows adorned with gaudy streamers, pursued a secure course towards the harbours of Syracuse.

The emulation of the rowers was animated by the mingled sounds of the trumpet and clarion; and the regular decoration, the elegant splendour, which distinguished every part of the equipment, exhibited a pompous spectacle of naval triumph. Their appearance, even at a distance, announced the country to which they belonged; and both the joy of the besiegers, and the terror of the besieged, acknowledged that Athens was the only city in the world capable of sending to the sea such a beautiful and magnificent contribution. The Syracusans employed not unavailing efforts to check the progress, or to hinder the approach, of the hostile armament; which, besides innumerable foreign vessels and transports, consisted of seventy-three Athenian galleys, commanded by the experienced valour of Demosthenes and Eurymedon. The pikemen on board exceeded five thousand; the light-armed troops were nearly as numerous; and, including the rowers, workmen, and attendants, the whole strength may be reckoned superior to that originally sent with Nicias,† which amounted to twenty thousand men.

The combined forces assault Syracuse.

The misfortunes hitherto attending the operations in Sicily had lowered the character of the general; and this circumstance, as well as the superior abilities of Demosthenes, entitled him to assume the tone of authority in their conjunct deliberations. His advice, which Eurymedon highly approved, and in which the dilatory caution of Nicias finally acquiesced, was clear

* Thucyd. p. 501, & seqq.

† Comp. Thucyd. *supra* citat. Diodor. l. xiii. p. 336. Plut. in Nicia.

and simple. "They ought to avail themselves of the alarm which the unexpected arrival of such a powerful reinforcement had spread among the enemy; and instead of submitting to the tedious formalities of a siege, at once assault the walls of Syracuse. He trusted, by the valour of his troops, to obtain, in one day, the valuable reward of long and severe labours. But if the gods had otherwise determined, it would be time to desist from an enterprise, in which delay was equal to defeat, and to employ the bravery of the Athenian youth in repelling the invaders of their country."*

After ravaging the banks of the Anapus, and making some ineffectual attempts against the fortifications on that side, probably with a view to divert the attention of the enemy. Demosthenes chose the first hour of a moonshine night, to proceed with the flower of the army to seize the fortresses in Epipolæ. The march was performed with successful celerity; the out-posts were surprised; the guards put to the sword; and three separate encampments, of the Syracusans, the Sicilians, and allies, formed a feeble opposition to the Athenian ardour. As if their victory had already been complete, the assailants began to pull down the wooden battlements, or to urge the pursuit with a rapidity which disordered their ranks.

Their first operations successful.

Meanwhile, the vigilant activity of Gylippus had assembled the whole force of Syracuse. At the approach of the enemy his vanguard retired. The Athenians were decoyed within the intricate windings of the walls and their irregular fury was first checked by the firmness of a Theban phalanx. A resistance so sudden and unexpected might alone have been decisive; but other circumstances were adverse to the Athenians; their ignorance of the ground, the alternate obscurity of night, and the deceitful glare of the moon, which, shining in the front of the Thebans, illumined the splendour of their arms, and multiplied the terror of their numbers. The

A general engagement, in which the Athenians are defeated.

* Thucyd. l. vii. p. 519.

foremost ranks of the pursuers were repelled; and, as they retreated to the main body, encountered the advancing Argives and Cerceyreans, who singing the pœan in their Doric dialect and accent, were unfortunately taken for enemies. Fear, and then rage, seized the Athenians, who thinking themselves encompassed on all sides, determined to force their way, and committed much bloodshed among their allies, before the mistake could be discovered. To prevent the repetition of dreadful error, their scattered bands were obliged at every moment to demand the watchword, which was at length betrayed to their adversaries. The consequence of this was doubly fatal. At every rencounter the silent Athenians were slaughtered without mercy, while the enemy, who knew their watch-word, might at pleasure join, or decline the battle, and easily oppress their weakness, or elude their strength. The terror and confusion increased; the rout became general. Gylippus pursued in good order with his victorious troops. The vanquished could not descend in a body by the narrow passages through which they had mounted. Many abandoned their arms, and explored the unknown paths of the rocky Epipolé. Others threw themselves from precipices, rather than await the pursuers. Several thousands were left dead or wounded on the scene of action; and, in the morning, the greater part of the stragglers were intercepted and cut off by the Syracusan cavalry.*

The salutary measures proposed by Demosthenes, prevented by Nicias.

This dreadful and unexpected disaster suspended the operations of the siege. The Athenian generals spent the time in fruitless deliberations concerning their future measures, while the army lay encamped on the marshy and unhealthy banks of the Anapus. The vicissitudes of an autumnal atmosphere, corrupted by the foul vapours of an unwholesome soil, made a severe impression on the irritable fibres of men, exhausted by fatigue, dejected by disgrace, and deprived of hope. A general sickness broke out in the camp. Demos-

* Thucydidi: p. 520, & seqq.

thenes urged this calamity as a new reason for hastening their departure, while it was yet possible to cross the Ionian sea, without risking the danger of a winter's tempest. But Nicias dissuaded the design of leaving Sicily until they should be warranted to take this important step by the positive authority of the republic. "Those who were actually the most bent on ignominious flight, would, after their return, be the foremost to accuse the weakness or the treachery of their commanders; and for his own part, he would rather die honourably in the field of battle, than perish by the unjust sentence of his country." Demosthenes and Eurymedon knew by fatal experience, the irascible temper of an Athenian assembly; they only insisted that the armament should at least remove to a more convenient station, from whence, after the troops had recovered their usual health and spirits, they might harass the enemy by continual descents, until they obtained an opportunity of fighting the Syracusan fleet on the open sea.

But even this resolution was strenuously opposed by Nicias, who knew by the secret correspondence which he maintained with certain traitors in Syracuse, that the treasury of that city had been exhausted by the enormous expense of two thousand talents already incurred in the war, and that the magistrates had stretched their credit to its utmost bounds, in borrowing from their allies; and who therefore naturally flattered himself, that the vigour of their resistance would abate with the decay of their resources. The colleagues of Nicias were confounded with the firmness of an opposition so unlike the yielding timidity of his ordinary character, and so inconsistent with the sentiments which he had often expressed concerning the Sicilian expedition. They imagined that he might rely on some more important ground of confidence, which his caution was unwilling to explain; they submitted therefore to his opinion, an opinion equally fatal to himself and to them, and to the armament which they commanded.*

His motives.

* Comp. Thucyd. p. 524, & Plut. in Nicia.

The Syracusans receive a reinforcement.

Meanwhile, the prudence of Gylippus profited of the fame of his victory, to draw a powerful reinforcement from the Sicilian cities; and the transports, so long expected from Peloponnesus, finally arrived in the harbour of Ortygia. The Peloponnesian forces had sailed from Greece early in the spring; and it is not explained for what reason they touched on the coast of Cyrenaica. There, they continued for some months, that they might defend their Grecian brethren, actually endangered by the impetuous assaults of the Lybians; and having conquered that barbarous enemy, they augmented their fleet with a few Cyrenian galleys,* and safely reached Syracuse, the place of their first destination. This squadron formed the last assistance sent to either of the contending parties, and nothing farther was required to complete the actors in the following dreadful scene; for by the accession of the Cyrenians, Syracuse was either attacked or defended by all the various divisions of the Grecian name, which formed, in that age, the most civilized portion of the inhabitants of Asia, Africa, and Europe.

The Athenians prepare to raise the siege.

The arrival of such powerful auxiliaries to the besieged, and the increasing force of the malady, totally disconcerted the Athenians. Even Nicias agreed to set sail. Every necessary preparation was made for this purpose, and the cover of night was chosen, as most proper for concealing their own disgrace, and for eluding the vengeance of the enemy. But the night appointed for their departure was distinguished by an inauspicious eclipse of the moon, for so at least it was judged by the superstitious fears of Nicias, and by the ignorance of his diviners,† even in the vain art which they professed. The voyage was deferred till the mystical number of thrice nine days. But, before the expiration of that time, it was no longer practicable; for the

* Thucyd. p. 527.

† The rules of divination, we are told, should have taught them, that the obscurity of an eclipse betokened a successful retreat. Plutarch. in Nicia.

design was soon betrayed to the Syracusans, and this discovery, added to the encouragement derived from the circumstances of which we have already taken notice, increased their eagerness to attack the enemy by sea and land. Their attempts failed to destroy, by fire-ships, the Athenian fleet. They were more successful in employing superior numbers to divide the strength, and to weaken the resistance, of an enfeebled and dejected foe. During three days, there was a perpetual succession of battles military and naval. On the first day fortune hung in suspense; the second deprived the Athenians of a considerable squadron commanded by Eurymedon; and this misfortune was embittered, on the third, by the loss of eighteen galleys, with their crews.*

The Syracusans celebrated their victory with triumphant enthusiasm; while their orators "extolled and magnified the glory of a city, which by its native prowess and single danger, had not only maintained the independence of Sicily, but avenged the injuries of the whole Grecian name, too long dishonoured and afflicted by the oppressive tyranny of Athens. This tyranny had been acquired and confirmed by the usurped sovereignty of the sea; but even on that element, the courage of Syracuse had defeated the experience of the enemy. Their renown would be immortal, if they accomplished the useful and meritorious work; and if, by intercepting the retreat, and destroying the armament of the Athenians, they crushed at once the power, and for ever humbled the pride, of that aspiring people."

Their purpose opposed by the enemy;

This design, suggested by the wisdom of Hermocrates, was eagerly adopted by the active zeal of his fellow-citizens, who strove, with unremitting ardour, to throw a chain of vessels across the mouth of the Great Harbour, about a mile in breadth. The labour was complete before Nicias, totally occupied by other objects, attempted to interrupt it. After

who throw a chain across the Great Harbour.

* Thucyd. p. 528, & seqq.

repeated defeats, and although he was so miserably tormented by the stone, that he had frequently solicited his recall, that virtuous commander, whose courage rose in adversity, used the utmost diligence to retrieve the affairs of his country. The shattered galleys were speedily refitted, and again prepared to the number of an hundred and ten; to risk the event of a battle. As they had suffered greatly, on former occasions, by the hardness and heaviness of the Syracusan prows, Nicias provided them with grappling-irons, fitted to prevent the recoil of their opponents, and the repetition of the hostile stroke. The decks were crowded with armed men, and the contrivance to which the enemy had hitherto chiefly owed their success of introducing the firmness and stability of a military, into a naval engagement, was adopted in its full extent by the Athenians. When the fleet was ready for sea, Nicias recalled the troops from the various posts and fortresses still occupied by their arms, and formed them into one camp on the shore, where, on the day of battle, their ranks might be extended as widely as the vicinity of the Syracusan ramparts could safely permit; that a spacious retreat might be secured to the Athenian ships, if persecuted by their usual bad fortune; in which fatal alternative, nothing remained but to retire by land with the miserable remnant of the army. But Nicias did not yet despair, that the last efforts of his countrymen would break the enemy's chain at the mouth of the Great Harbour; and that they would return victorious, to transport their encamped companions to the friendly ports of Naxos and Catana.

Both sides
prepare for
battle.

Elated by this hope, he forgot his bodily infirmities, and suppressed the anguish of his soul.

With a serene and magnanimous firmness, he cheered the dejection of the Athenians, exhorting them, before they embarked, by an affecting and manly speech, "to remember the vicissitudes of war, and the instability of fortune.* Though hitherto unsuccessful, they had every thing to expect from the strength of their actual preparations; nor ought men,

* Thucyd. p. 535, & seqq.

who had tried and surmounted so many dangers, to yield to the weak prejudices of unexperienced folly, and cloud the prospect of future victory by the gloomy remembrance of past defeat. They yet enjoyed an opportunity to defend their lives, their liberty, their friends, their country, and the mighty name of Athens; an opportunity which never could return, since the whole fortune of the republic was embarked in the present fleet." When Gylippus and the Syracusan commanders were apprised of the designs of the enemy they hastened to the defence of the bar which had been thrown across the entrance of the harbour. It is uncertain for what reason they had left open one narrow passage,* on either side of which they stationed a powerful squadron. Gylippus animated the sailors with such topics, as the occasion naturally suggested, and returned to take the conduct of the land forces, leaving Sicanus, Agatharcus, and Pythen, the two first to command the wings, and the last, a citizen of Corinth, to command the centre of the Syracusan fleet, which fell short of the Athenian by the number of twenty galleys. But the former was admirably provided with whatever seemed most necessary for attack or for defence; even the Athenian grappling-irons had not been overlooked; to elude the dangerous grasp of these instruments, the prows of the Syracusan vessels were covered with wet and slippery hides.

Before the Athenians set sail, Nicias, that nothing might be neglected to obtain success, went round the whole armament, addressing, in the most pathetic terms, the several commanders by name, recalling to them the objects most dear and most respectable, which they were engaged by every tie of honour and affection to defend, and conjuring them, by their families, their friends, and their paternal gods, to exert whatever skill or courage they collectively, or as individuals, possessed, on this ever memorable and most important occasion. He then returned to the camp with an enfeebled body and an anxious

Naval engagement in the Great Harbour.

* *Και τον καταλειφθента διεκπλουν.* Thucyd. p. 451.

mind, committing the last hope of the republic to the active valour of Demosthenes, Eudemus, and Menander. The first impression of the Athenians was irresistible; they burst through the passage of the bar, and repelled the squadrons on either side. As the entrance widened, the Syracusans, in their turn, rushed into the harbour which was more favourable than the open sea to their mode of fighting. Thither the foremost of the Athenians returned, either compelled by superior force, or that they might assist their companions. The engagement became general in the mouth of the harbour; and in this narrow space two hundred galleys fought, during the greatest part of the day with an obstinate and persevering valour. It would require the expressive energy of Thucydides, and the imitative, though inimitable, sounds and expressions of the Grecian tongue, to describe the noise, the tumult, and the ardour of the contending squadrons. The battle was not long confined to the shock of adverse prows, and to the distant hostility of darts and arrows. The nearest vessels grappled, and closed with each other, and their decks were soon converted into a field of blood. While the heavy-armed troops boarded the enemy's ships, they left their own exposed to a similar misfortune; the fleets were divided into massive clusters of adhering galleys; and the confusion of their mingled shouts overpowered the voice of authority; the Athenians exhorting not to abandon an element on which their republic had ever acquired victory and glory, for the dangerous protection of an hostile shore; and the Syracusans encouraging each other not to fly from an enemy, whose weakness or cowardice had long meditated flight.*

The Athe-
nians de-
feated.

The singular and tremendous spectacle of an engagement more fierce and obstinate than any that had ever been beheld in the Grecian seas, restrained the activity, and totally suspended the powers, of the numerous and adverse battalions which encircled the coast. The spectators and the actors were equally interested in the

* Thucyd. p. 543, & seqq.

important scene ; but the former, the current of whose sensibility was undiverted by any exertion of mind or body, felt more deeply and expressed more forcibly, the various emotions by which they were agitated.* Hope, fear, the shouts of victory, the shrieks of despair, the anxious solicitude of doubtful success, animated the countenances, the voice, and the gesture of the Athenians, whose whole reliance centred in their fleet. When at length their galleys evidently gave way on every side, the contrast of alternate, and the rapid tumult of successive, passions, subsided in a melancholy calm. This dreadful pause of astonishment and terror was followed by the disordered trepidation of flight and fear: many escaped to the camp: others ran, uncertain whither to direct their steps: while Nicias, with a small, but undismayed band, remained on the shore, to protect the landing of their unfortunate galleys. But the retreat of the Athenians could not probably have been affected, had it not been favoured by the actual circumstances of the enemy, as well as by the peculiar prejudices of ancient superstition. In this well-fought battle, the vanquished had lost fifty, and the victors forty vessels. It was incumbent on the latter to employ their immediate and most strenuous efforts to recover the dead bodies of their friends, that they might be honoured with the sacred and indispensable rites of funeral. The day was far spent; the strength of the sailors had been exhausted by a long continuance of unremitting labour; and both they, and their companions on shore, were more desirous to return to Syracuse to enjoy the fruits of victory, than to irritate the dangerous despair of the vanquished Athenians.†

It is observed by the Roman orator,‡ with no less truth than elegance, that not only the navy of Athens, but the glory and the empire of that republic, suffered shipwreck in the fatal harbour of Syracuse. The despondent degeneracy which immediately followed this ever

Their extreme despondency.

* Thucyd. p. 544.

† Thucyd. p. 545.

‡ Cic. in Verr. v. 37.

memorable engagement was testified in the neglect of a duty which the Athenians had never neglected before, and in renouncing a part of their national character, which it had hitherto been their greatest glory to maintain. They abandoned to insult and indignity the bodies of the slain; and when it was proposed to them by their commanders to prepare next day for a second engagement, since their vessels were still more numerous than those of the enemy, they, who had seldom avoided a superior, and who had never declined the encounter of an equal force, declared that no motive could induce them to withstand the weaker armament of Syracuse. Their only desire was to escape by land, under cover of the night, from a foe whom they had not courage to oppose, and from a place where every object was offensive to their sight, and most painful to their reflection.*

The Syracusans celebrate the festival of Hercules with licentious joy.

The behaviour of the Syracusans promised complete success to this design. The evening after the battle was the vigil of the feast of Hercules: and the still agitated combatants awakened, after a short and feverish repose, to celebrate the memory of their favourite hero, to whose propitious influence they probably ascribed the merit of the most splendid trophy that ever adorned the fame of Syracuse. From the triumph of victory, and grateful emotions of religious enthusiasm, there was an easy transition, in the creed and in the practice of the Greeks, to the extravagance of licentious joy, and the excesses of sensual indulgence. Sports, processions, music, dancing, the pleasures of the table, of the elegant arts, and of unguarded conversation, were incorporated in the texture of their religious worship. But the coincidence of a festival and a victory demanded an accumulated profusion of such enjoyments as sooth the senses and please the fancy. Amidst these giddy transports the Syracusans lost all remembrance of an enemy whom they despised; even the soldiers on guard joined the dissolute or frivolous amusements of their com-

* Thucydid. p. 545.

panions; and, during the greatest part of the night, Syracuse presented a mixed scene of secure gaiety, of thoughtless jollity, and of mad and most dangerous license.*

The firm and vigilant mind of Hermocrates alone withstood, but was unable to divert, the general current. It was impossible to rouse to the fatigues of war men buried in wine and pleasure, and intoxicated with victory; and, as he could not intercept by force, he determined to retard by stratagem, the intended retreat of the Athenians, whose numbers and resentment would still render them formidable to whatever part of Sicily they might remove their camp. A select band of horsemen, assuming the character of traitors, fearlessly approached the hostile ramparts, and warned the Athenians of the danger of departing that night, as many ambuscades lurked in the way, and all the most important passes were occupied by the enemy. The frequency of treason gained credit to the perfidious advice; and the Athenians, having changed their first resolution, were persuaded by Nicias to wait two days longer, that such measures might be taken as seemed best adapted to promote the safety and celerity of their march.†

Stratagem of Hermocrates to prevent the Athenian retreat.

The camp was raised on the third morning after the battle. Forty thousand men, of whom many were afflicted with wounds and disease, and all exhausted by fatigue, and dejected by calamity, exhibited the appearance, not of a flying army, but of a great and populous community, driven from their ancient habitations by the cruel vengeance of a conqueror. They had miserably fallen from the lofty expectations with which they sailed in triumph to the harbour of Syracuse. They had abandoned their galleys, their transports, the hopes of victory, and the glory of the Athenian name; and these collective sufferings were enhanced and exasperated by the painful images which struck the eyes and the fancy of each unfortunate individual. The mangled bodies of their companions and friends, deprived of the sacred rites of funeral, affected them

The Athenians raise their camp.

Their dreadful afflictions.

* Thucyd. p. 546.

† Thucyd. p. 547.

with a sentiment of religious horror, on which the weakness of human nature was happily unable to dwell. Their minds recoiled from the dreadful thought, but they could not divert their compassion from the numerous crowds of sick and wounded, who followed them with enfeebled and unequal steps, intreating, in the accent and attitude of unutterable anguish, to be delivered from the misery of famine, or the rage of an exasperated foe. Amidst such afflicting scenes, the heart of a stranger would have melted with tender sympathy; but what must the Athenians have felt, to see in this hopeless state, their parents, brothers, children, and friends! to hear, without the possibility of relieving, their lamentable complaints! and reluctantly to throw the clinging victims from their wearied necks and arms! Yet the care of personal safety prevailed over every other care; for the soldiers, either destitute of slaves, or distrusting their fidelity, were not only encumbered by their armour, but oppressed by the weight of their provisions.*

Melancholy
firmness of
Nicias.

The superior rank of Nicias entitled him to a pre-eminence of toil and of wo: and he deserves the regard of posterity by his character and sufferings, and still more by the melancholy firmness of his conduct. The load of accumulated disasters did not sink him into inactive despondency. He moved with a rapid pace around every part of the army, and the ardour of his mind re-animating the langour of his debilitated frame, he exclaimed, with a loud and distinct voice, "Athenians and allies! do not yet despair. Many have escaped from still greater evils. As to myself, who, in bodily strength, surpass not the weakest among you (for you see to what a miserable condition my malady has reduced me,) and who, in the happiness of private life, and the deceitful gifts of prosperity, had long been distinguished above the most illustrious of my contemporaries, I am now confounded in affliction with the meanest and most worthless. Yet am I unconscious of deserving such a fatal

* Thucyd. p. 548.

reverse of fortune. My conduct towards men has been irreproachable; my piety towards the gods conspicuous and sincere. For this reason I am still animated with confidence; calamities, unmerited by guilt, are disarmed of their terrors. If we have incurred the indignation of the gods by our ambitious designs against Sicily, our offence, surely, is sufficiently expiated by past sufferings, which now render us the objects of compassion. Other nations have attacked their neighbours with less provocation, and have yet escaped with a gentler punishment; nor will experience warrant the belief, that, for the errors of human frailty, Providence should impose penalties too heavy to be borne. We have less reason to adopt an impious prejudice so dishonourable to the gods, when we consider the means of defence which their goodness has yet left us. Our numbers, our resolution, and even our misfortunes, still render us formidable. There is not any army in Sicily able to intercept our course; much less to expel us from the first friendly territory in which we may fix our camp. If we can secure, therefore, our present safety, by a prudent, speedy, and courageous retreat, we may afterwards retrieve our lost honour, and restore the fallen glory of Athens; since the chief ornament of a state consists in brave and virtuous men, not in empty ships and undefended walls.”*

The actions of Nicias fully corresponded with his words. He neglected none of the duties of a great general. Instead of leading the army towards Naxos and Catana, in which direction there was reason to apprehend many secret ambushes of the enemy, he conducted them by the western route towards Gela and Camarina; expecting, by this measure, to find provisions in greater plenty, as well as to elude the latent snares of the Syracusans. That nothing might be omitted which promised the hope of relief, messengers were immediately despatched to the neighbouring cities, which might possibly be tempted by their natural jealousy of the growing prosperity of Syracuse, to

The retreat
of the Athenians,

* Thucyd. p. 550.

favour the retreat of the vanquished. The troops were then divided into two squares, as the most secure and capacious arrangement. Nicias led the van; Demosthenes conducted the rear; the baggage and unarmed multitude, occupied the centre. In this order of march they passed the river Anapus, the ford of which was feebly disputed by an inconsiderable guard; and, having proceeded the first day only five miles, they encamped in the evening on a rising ground, after being much harassed during the latter part of their journey by the Syracusan cavalry and archers, who galled them at a distance, intercepted the stragglers, and avoided, by a seasonable retreat, to commit the security of their own fortune with the dangerous despair of the Athenians. Next day, having marched only twenty furlongs, they reached a spacious plain, the convenience of which invited them to repose; especially as they needed a supply of water and provisions, which might be easily obtained from the surrounding country.*

interrupted
by the ene-
my. Before this time, the enemy were apprised of their line of march; and, in order to interrupt it, they sent a numerous detachment to fortify the mountain of Acræum. This mountain, which probably gave name to the small town situate in its neighbourhood, intersected the direct road to Gela and Camerina. It was distant a few miles from the Athenian encampment, and a small degree of art might render it impregnable, since it was of a steep and rapid ascent, and encompassed on every side by the rocky channel of a loud and foaming torrent. In vain the Athenians attempted, on three successive days, to force the passage. They were repelled with loss in every new attack, which became more feeble than the preceding. In the first and most desperate, an accidental storm of thunder increased the courage of the Syracusans, and the terror of the Athenians. A similar event had, in the first engagement after the invasion of Sicily, produced an opposite effect on the contending na-

* Thucydid. p. 552, & seqq.

tions. But the hopes and the fears of men change with their fortune.

In the evening after the last unsuccessful contest the condition of the Athenians was peculiarly deplorable. The numbers of the wounded had been increased by the fruitless attempts to pass the mountain; the enemy had continually galled and insulted them as they retreated to their camp; the adjacent territory could no longer supply them with the necessaries of life; and they must be compelled, after all their hardships and fatigues, to make a long circuit by the sea-shore, if they expected to reach, in safety, the places of their respective destination. Even this resolution (for there was no alternative,) however dreadful to men in their comfortless and exhausted state, was recommended by Nicias, who, to conceal his design from the enemy, caused innumerable fires to be lighted, in every part of the camp.* The troops then marched out under cover of the night, and in the same order which they had hitherto observed. But they had not proceeded far in this nocturnal expedition, when the obscurity of the skies, the deceitful tracks of an unknown and hostile country, filled the more timid or unfortunate with imaginary terrors. Their panic, as is usual in great bodies of men, was speedily communicated to those around them; and Demosthenes, with above one half of his division, fatally mistook the road, and quitted never more to rejoin, the the rest of the army.

Change
their line of
march.

The scouts of Gylippus and the Syracusans immediately brought intelligence of this important event, which furnished an opportunity to attack the divided strength of the Athenians. His superior knowledge of the country enabled Gylippus, by the celerity of his march, to intercept the smaller division, and to surround them on every side, in the difficult and intricate defiles which led to the ford of the river Erinois. There, he inflicted on them wounds and death, during a whole

The division
commanded by
Demosthenes
surrenders to
Gylippus.

* Thucyd. p. 552, & seqq.

day, with darts, arrows, and javelins. When the measure of their sufferings was complete, he proclaimed towards the evening, by the sound of the trumpet, and with the loud voice of the herald, freedom, forgiveness, and protection to all who should desert and abandon the bad fortune of their leaders; an offer which was accepted by the troops of several Asiatic islands, and other dependant and tributary countries. At length he entered into treaty with Demosthenes himself, whose soldiers laid down their arms, and delivered their money (which filled the capacious hollow of four broad bucklers,) on condition that they should not suffer death, imprisonment or famine.* Notwithstanding the number of the deserters and of the slain, the remainder still amounted to six thousand, who were sent to Syracuse with their captive general, under a powerful and vigilant escort, while the activity of Gylippus followed the flying battalions of the enemy, which had been conducted by Nicias to the distance of twenty miles, towards the fatal banks of the river Assinaros.

The division under Nicias overtaken by the enemy.

The Syracusans overtook the rear before the van could arrive at the lofty and abrupt margin of this rapid stream: and an herald was sent to Nicias, exhorting him to imitate the example of his colleague, and to surrender without farther bloodshed, to the irresistible valour of his victorious pursuers. Nicias disbelieved, or affected to disbelieve the report: but when a confidential messenger, whom he was allowed to despatch for information, brought certain intelligence of the surrender and disgrace of Demosthenes, he also condescended to propose terms, in the name of the Athenians, engaging, on the immediate cessation of hostilities, to reimburse the magistrates of Syracuse for the expense of the war, and to deliver Athenian hostages (a citizen for a talent) until the debt should be liquidated.†

Their melancholy defence.

These terms were rejected by the Syracusans with disdain: and Gylippus having occupied the most advantageous posts on every side, attacked

* Thucyd. p. 553.

† Ibid. p. 554.

the army of Nicias with the same mode of warfare, which two days before, had proved so destructive to their unfortunate companions. During the whole day they bore, with extraordinary patience, the hostile assault, still expecting, under cover of the night, to escape the cruel vigilance of the enemy. But that hope was vain: Gylippus perceived their departure: and although three hundred men of determined courage gallantly broke through the guards, and effected their escape, the rest were no sooner discovered than they returned to their former station, and laid down their arms in silent despair. Yet the return of the morning brought back their courage. They again took up their arms, and marched towards the river, miserably galled and afflicted by the hostile archers and cavalry. Their distress was most lamentable and incurable: yet hope did not totally forsake them; for like men in the oppression and languor of a consuming disease, they still entertained a confused idea, that their sufferings would end, could they but reach the opposite banks of the neighbouring river.*

The desire of assuaging their thirst encouraged this daring design. They rushed with frantic disorder into the rapid current; the pursuing Syracusans, who had occupied the rocky banks, destroying them with innumerable volleys of missile weapons. In the Assinaros they had a new enemy to contend with. The depth and force of the waters triumphed over their single, and shook their implicated strength. Many were borne down the stream. At length the weight of their numbers resisted the violence of the torrent; but a new form of danger and of horror presented itself to the eyes of Nicias. His soldiers turned their fury against each other, disputing at the point of the sword, the unwholesome draughts of the agitated and turbid river. This spectacle melted the firmness of his manly soul. He surrendered to Gylippus, and asked quarter for the miserable remnant of his troops, who had not perished in the Assinaros, or been destroyed by the Syracusan archers and

Horrid
scene on the
banks of the
Assinaros.

* Thucyd. p. 554.

cavalry.* Before the commands of the Lacedæmonian general could pervade the army, many of the soldiers had, according to the barbarous practice of the age, seized their prisoners and slaves; so that the Athenian captives were afterwards distributed among several communities of Sicily, which had sent assistance to Syracuse. The rest, upon laying down their arms, were entitled to the pity and protection of Gylippus; who, after he had sent proper detachments to intercept and collect the stragglers, returned in triumph to the capital with the inestimable trophies of his valour and conduct.

Death of the Athenian generals. Nicias had little to expect from the *humanity* of a proud and victorious Spartan; but Demosthenes might naturally flatter himself with the hope of *justice*. He urged with energy, but urged in vain, the observance of the capitulation which had been ratified with due forms, on the faith of which he had surrendered himself and the troops intrusted to his command. The public prisoners, conducted successively to Syracuse, and exceeding together the number of seven thousand, were treated with the same inhuman cruelty. They were universally condemned to labour in the mines and quarries of Sicily;† their whole sustenance was bread and water; they suffered alternately the ardours of a scorching sun, and the chilling damps of autumn. For seventy days and nights they languished in this dreadful captivity, during which, the diseases incident to their manner of life were rendered infectious by the stench of the dead bodies, which corrupted the purity of the surrounding air. At length an eternal separation was made between those who should enjoy the happier lot of being sold as slaves into distant lands, and those who should forever be confined to their terrible dungeons. The Athenians, with such Italians and Sicilians as had unnaturally embraced their cause, were reserved for the latter doom. Their generals, Nicias and Demosthenes, had not lived to behold this melancholy hour. Gylippus would have spared them their lives,

* Thucyd. p. 555.

† Ibid. p. 556.

not from any motives of humanity and esteem, but that his joyous return to Sparta might have been graced by their presence. But the resentment of the Syracusans, the fears of the Corinthians; above all, the suspicious jealousy of those perfidious traitors who had maintained a secret correspondence with Nicias, which they dreaded, lest the accidents of his future life might disclose, loudly demanded the immediate execution of the captive generals.* The Athenians of those times justly regretted the loss of Demosthenes, a gallant and enterprising commander; but posterity will for ever lament the fate of Nicias, the most pious, the most virtuous, and the most unfortunate man of the age in which he lived.

Amidst this dark and dreadful scene of cruelty and revenge, we must not omit to mention one singular example of humanity, which broke forth like a meteor in the gloom of a nocturnal tempest. The Syracusans, who could punish their helpless captives with such relentless severity, had often melted into tears at the affecting strains of Euripides,† an Athenian poet, who had learned in the Socratic school to adorn the lessons of philosophy with the charms of fancy, and who was regarded by the taste of his contemporaries, as he still is by many enlightened judges, as the most tender and pathetic, the most philosophical and instructive, of all tragic writers. The pleasure which the Syracusans had derived from his inimitable poetry, made them long to hear it rehearsed by the flexible voices and harmonious pronunciation of the Athenians, so unlike, and so superior, to the rudeness and asperity of their own Doric dialect. They desired their captives to repeat the plaintive scenes of their favourite bard. The captives obeyed; and, affecting to represent the woes of ancient kings and heroes, they too faithfully expressed their own. Their taste and sensibility endeared them to the Syracusans, who unlinked their bonds, received them with kindness into their families,‡

A singular exception to this general cruelty.

* Thucyd. i. vii. ad. fin.

† See above, p. 115.

‡ *ἢτοι τεθνηκεν ἢ διδάσκει γραμματα*, "He is either dead or rehearsing

and, after treating them with all the honourable distinctions of ancient hospitality, restored them to their longing and afflicted country, as a small but precious wreck of the most formidable armament that had ever sailed from a Grecian harbour. At their return to Athens, the grateful captives walked in solemn procession to the house of Euripides, whom they hailed as their deliverer from slavery and death.* This acknowledgment, infinitely more honourable than all the crowns and splendour that ever surrounded the person, and even than all the altars and temples that ever adorned the memory of a poet,† must have transported Euripides with the *second* triumph which the heart of man can feel. He would have enjoyed the *first*, if his countrymen had owed to his virtues the tribute which they paid to his talents; and if, instead of the beauty and elegance of his verses, they had been saved by his probity, his courage, or his patriotism; qualities which, still more than genius and fancy, constitute the real excellence and dignity of human nature.

verses:” an expression first introduced at this time, was afterwards applied proverbially, in speaking of travellers in foreign countries, whose fate was uncertain.

* Plutarch. in Nicia.

† See above, Chapter VI.

CHAP. XXI.

Consequences of the Athenian Misfortunes in Sicily.—Formidable Confederacy against Athens.—Peculiar Resources of Free Governments.—Naval Operations.—Battle of Miletus.—Intrigues of Alcibiades.—The Athenian Democracy subverted.—Tyrannical Government of the Four Hundred.—Battle of Eretria.—Democracy re-established in Athens.—Naval Success of the Athenians.—Triumphant Return of Alcibiades.—The Eleusinian Mysteries—and Plynteria.

IN the populous and extensive kingdoms of modern Europe, the revolutions of public affairs seldom disturb the humble obscurity of private life; but the national transactions of Greece involved the interest of every family, and deeply affected the fortune and happiness of every individual. Had the arms of the Athenians proved successful in Sicily, each citizen would have derived from that event an immediate accession of wealth, as well as of power, and have felt a proportional increase of honour and security. But their proud hopes perished for ever in the harbour of Syracuse. The succeeding disasters shook to the foundation the fabric of their empire. In one rash enterprise they lost their army, their fleet, the prudence of their experienced generals, together with the flourishing vigour of their manly youth.*—Irreparable disasters! which totally disqualified them to resist the confederacy of Peloponnesus,

Extent of
the Athenian mis-
fortunes
in Sicily.

* Thucyd. l. vii. p. 557. Cicero goes farther. Hic primum, opes illius civitatis victæ, comminutæ, depressæque sunt: in hoc portu Atheniensium nobilitatis, imperii, gloriæ naufragium factum existimatur. Cicer. in Verrum, v. 37.

reinforced by the resentment of a new and powerful enemy. While a Lacedæmonian army invested their city, they had reason to dread that a Syracusan fleet should assault the Piræus; that Athens must finally yield to these combined attacks, and her once prosperous citizens, destroyed by the sword, or dragged into captivity, atone by their death or disgrace for the cruelties which they had recently inflicted on the wretched republics of Melos and Scioné.

The news
brought to
Athens.
Olymp.
xci. 4.
A. C. 413.

The dreadful alternative of victory and defeat, renders it little surprising that the Athenians should have rejected intelligence, which they must have received with horror. The first messengers of such sad news were treated with contempt: but it was impossible long* to withhold belief from the miserable fugitives, whose squalid and dejected countenances too faithfully attested the public calamity. Such evidence could not be refused; the arrogance of incredulity was abashed, and the whole republic thrown into consternation, or seized with despair. The venerable members of the Areopagus expressed the majesty of silent sorrow; but the piercing cries of we extended many a mile along the lofty walls which joined the Piræus to the city; and the licentious populace raged with unbridled fury against the diviners and orators, whose blind predictions, and ambitious harangues, had promoted an expedition eternally fatal to their country.†

Combina-
tion in
Greece
against
Athens.

The distress of the Athenians was too great to admit the comfort of sympathy; but had they been capable of receiving, they had little reason to expect, that melancholy consolation. The tidings so afflicting to *them* gave unspeakable joy to their

* The calamity was so great that the boldest imagination had never dared to conceive its possibility. Their minds being thus unprepared, the Athenians, says Thucydides, disbelieved *καὶ τοὶ παρὰ τῶν στρατιωτῶν ἐξ αὐτῶν τοῦ ἐργοῦ διασφενδαῖον* even those soldiers who escaped from this melancholy business. The stories of Plutarch in Nicia, of Athenæus, &c. may be safely rejected as fictions, since they are inconsistent with Thucydides' narrative.

† Thucyd. l. viii. p. 558, & seqq.

neighbours: many feared, most hated, and all envied a people who had long usurped the dominion of Greece. The Athenian allies, or rather subjects, scattered over so many coasts and islands, prepared to assert their independence; the confederates of Sparta, among whom the Syracusans justly assumed the first rank, were unsatisfied with victory, and longed for revenge: even those communities, which had hitherto declined the danger of a doubtful contest, meanly solicited to become parties in a war, likely to terminate in the final destruction of Athens.*

Should all the efforts of such a powerful confederacy still prove insufficient to accomplish the ruin of the devoted city, there was yet another enemy behind, from whose strength and animosity the Athenians had every thing to fear. The long and peaceful reign of Artaxerxes, king of Persia, ended four hundred and twenty-five years before the Christian æra. The two following years were remarkable for a rapid succession of kings, Xerxes, Sogdianus, Ochus; the last of whom assumed the name of Darius, to which historians have added the epithet of Nothus, the bastard, to distinguish this effeminate prince from his illustrious predecessor.† The first years of Darius Nothus were employed in confirming his disputed authority, and in watching the dangerous intrigues of his numerous kinsmen who aspired to the throne. When every rival was removed that could either disturb his quiet or offend his suspicion, the monarch sunk into an indolent security, and his voluptuous court was governed by the feeble administration of women and eunuchs.‡ But in the ninth year of his reign, Darius was roused from his lethargy by the revolt of Egypt and Lydia. The defection of the latter threatened to tear from his dominion the valuable provinces of Asia Minor; a consequence which he determined to prevent by employing the bravery of Pharna-

Abetted by
the resentment
of
Persia.

* Thucyd. l. viii. p. 558, & seqq. Diodor. l. xiii. p. 348.

† Diodor. l. xii. p. 322. Ctesias, Persic. c. xlv. & seqq.

‡ Ctesias, c. xlvii.

bazus, and the policy of the crafty Tissaphernes, to govern respectively the northern and southern districts of that rich and fertile peninsula. The abilities of these generals not only quelled the rebellion in Lydia, but extended the arms of their master towards the shores of the *Ægean*, as well as of the *Hellespont* and *Propontis*; in direct opposition to the treaty which forty years before had been ratified between the Athenians, then in the height of their prosperity, and the unwarlike Artaxerxes. But the recent misfortunes of that ambitious people flattered the Persian commanders with the hope of restoring the whole Asiatic coast to the Great King,* as well as of inflicting exemplary punishment on the proud city, which had resisted the power, dismembered the empire, and tarnished the glory of Persia.

The Athenian allies prepare to revolt.

The terror of such a formidable combination might have reduced the Athenians to despair; and our surprise that this consequence should not immediately follow, will be increased by the following reflection. Not to mention the immortal trophies of Alexander, or the extensive ravages of Zingis Khan, Tamerlane, and the Tartar princes of their race; the Spaniards, the Portuguese, and other nations of modern Europe, have, with a handful of men, marched victorious over the effeminate or barbarous coasts of the eastern and western world. The hardy discipline of Europe easily prevailed over the unwarlike softness of India and the savage ignorance of America. But the rapid success of all these conquerors was owing to their military knowledge† and experience. By the superiority of their arms and of their discipline, the Romans subdued the nations of the earth. But the Athenians afford the only example of a people, who, by the virtues of the mind alone, acquired an extensive dominion over men equally improved with them.

* Thucyd. l. viii. p. 560. & Ctesias, Persic. c. li.

† If that of the Tartars should be doubtful, the reader may consult Mons. de Guignes's *Hist. des Huns*, or Mr. Gibbon's admirable description of the warlike manners of the pastoral nations, v. ii.

selves in the arts of war and government. They possessed, or were believed to possess, superior courage and capacity to the nations around them; and this opinion, which should seem not entirely destitute of foundation, enabled them to maintain, by very feeble garrisons, an absolute authority in the islands of the *Ægæan*, as well as in the cities of the Asiatic coast. Their disasters and disgrace in Sicily destroyed at once the real and the ideal supports of their power; the loss of one-third of their citizens made it impossible to supply, with fresh recruits, the exhausted strength of their garrisons in foreign parts; the terror of their fleet was no more; and their multiplied defeats before the walls of Syracuse, had converted into contempt that admiration in which Athens had been long held by Greeks and Barbarians.

But in free governments there are rich latent resources which public calamities alone can bring to light; and adversity, which, to individuals endowed with inborn vigour of mind, is the great school of virtue and of heroism, furnishes also to the enthusiasm of popular assemblies the noblest field for the display of national honour and magnanimity. Had the measures of the Athenians depended on one man, or even on a few, it is probable that the selfish timidity of a prince, and the cautious prudence of a council, would have sunk under the weight of misfortunes, too heavy for the unsupported strength of ordinary minds. But the first spark of generous ardour, which the love of virtue, of glory, and the republic, or even the meaner motives of ambition and vanity, excited in the assembled multitude, was diffused and increased by the natural contagion of sympathy: the patriotic flame was communicated to every breast; and the social warmth, reflected from such a variety of objects, became too intense to be resisted by the coldness of caution and the damps of despair.

Peculiar resources of free governments.

With one mind and resolution the Athenians determined to brave the severity of fortune, and to withstand the assaults of the enemy. Nor did this noble design evaporate in useless speculation; the

Prudent and vigorous measures of the Athenians.

wisest measures were adopted for reducing it to practice. The great work began, as national reformation ought always to begin, by regulating the finances, and lepping off every branch of superfluous expense. The clamour of turbulent demagogues was silenced; aged wisdom and experience were allowed calmly to direct the public councils; new levies were raised; the remainder of their fleet was equipped for sea; the motions of the colonies and tributary states were watched with an anxious solicitude, and every proper expedient was employed that might appease their animosity, or render it impotent.* Yet these measures, wise and vigorous as they were, could not, probably, have suspended the fall of Athens, had not several concurring causes facilitated their operation. The weak, dilatory, and ineffectual proceedings of the Spartan confederacy; the temporising, equivocal, and capricious conduct of the Persian governors; above all, the intrigues and enterprising genius of Alcibiades, who, after involving his country in inextricable calamities, finally undertook its defence, and retarded, though he could not prevent, its destiny.

The Peloponnesians and Persians prepare to act against the Asiatic dependencies of Athens. Olymp. xcii. 1. A. C. 412.

In the year following the unfortunate expedition into Sicily, the Spartans prepared a fleet of an hundred sail, of which twenty-five galleys were furnished by their own sea-ports; twenty-five by the Thebans; fifteen by the Corinthians; and the remainder by Locris, Phocis, Megara, and the maritime cities on the coast of Peloponnesus. This armament was destined to encourage and support the revolt of the Asiatic subjects of the Athenians.

The islands of Chios and Lesbos, as well as the city Erythræ on the continent, solicited the Spartans to join them with their naval force. Their request was enforced by Tissaphernes, who promised to pay the sailors, and to victual the ships. At the same time, an ambassador from Cyzicus, a populous town situate on an island of the Propontis, entreated the Lacedæmonian armament to sail to the safe and capacious harbours

* Thucyd. l. viii. p. 559. Diodor. l. xiii. p. 349.

which had long formed the wealth and the ornament of that city, and to expel the Athenian garrisons, to which the Cyzicenes and their neighbours reluctantly submitted. The Persian Pharnabazus seconded their proposal; offered the same conditions with Tissaphernes; and so little harmony subsisted between the lieutenants of the Great King, that each urged his particular demand, with a total unconcern about the important interests of their common master.* The Lacedæmonians held many consultations among themselves, and with their allies; hesitated, deliberated, resolved, and changed their resolution; and at length were persuaded by Alcibiades to prefer the overture of Tissaphernes and the Ionians to that of the Hellespontines and Pharnabazus.

Dilatory measures of the confederates.

The delay occasioned by this deliberation was the principal, but not the only cause, which hindered the allies from acting expeditiously, at a time when expedition was of the utmost importance. A variety of private views diverted them from the general aim of the confederacy; and the season had far advanced before the Corinthians, distinguished as they were by excess of antipathy to Athens, were prepared to sail. They determined, from pride, perhaps, as well as superstition, to celebrate,† before leaving their harbours, the Isthmian games, consecrated to Neptune, the third of the Grecian festivals in point of dignity and splendour. From this ceremony the Athenians, though enemies, were not excluded by the Corinthian magistrates; nor did they exclude themselves, though oppressed by the weight of past misfortunes, and totally occupied by the thoughts of providing against future evils.

The Athenians discover and defeat the designs of the Corinthians and the Chians. Olymp. xcii. 1. A. C. 416.

* Thucyd. p. 561 & 562.

† "Πῶς τὰ ἱσθμια διαορῶσιν." The scholiast justly observes the force of the "δια" "thoroughly, completely," i. e. until they had celebrated the games, the complete number of days, appointed by antiquity. Vid. Æ. Port. ad. loc. p. 563.

While their representatives shared the amusements of this sacred spectacle, they neglected not the commission recommended by their country. They secretly informed themselves of the plan and particular circumstances of the intended revolt, and learned the precise time fixed for the departure of the Corinthian fleet. In consequence of this important intelligence, the Athenians anticipated the designs of the rebels of Chios, and carried off seven ships as pledges of their fidelity. The squadron which returned from this useful enterprise, intercepted the Corinthians as they sailed through the Saronic gulf; and having attacked and conquered them, pursued and blocked them up in their harbours.*

Successful
operations
of the con-
federates.

Meanwhile the Spartans and their allies sent to the Ionian coast such squadrons as were successively ready for sea, under the conduct of Alcibiades, Chalcideus, and Astyochus. The first of these commanders sailed to the isle of Chios, which was distracted by contending factions. The Athenian partisans were surprised, and compelled to submit; and the city, which possessed forty galleys, and yielded in wealth and populousness to none of the neighbouring colonies, became an accession to the Peloponnesian confederacy. The strong and rich town of Miletus followed the example: Erythræ and Clazomené surrendered to Chalcideus; several places of less note were conquered by Astyochus.

Battle of
Miletus.
Olymp.
xcii. 2.
A. C. 412.

When the Athenians received the unwelcome intelligence of these events, they voted the expenditure of a thousand talents, which, in more prosperous times, they had deposited in the citadel under the sanction of a decree of the senate and people, to reserve it for an occasion of the utmost danger. This seasonable supply enabled them to increase the fleet, which sailed under Phrynichus and other leaders, to the Isle of Lesbos. Having secured the fidelity of the Lesbians, who were ripe for rebellion, they endeavoured to recover their

* Thucyd. p. 564.

authority in Miletus, anciently regarded as the capital of the Ionic coast. A bloody battle was fought before the walls of that place, between the Athenians and Argives on one side, and the Peloponnesians, assisted by the troops of Tissaphernes and the revolted Milesians, on the other. The Athenian bravery defeated, on this occasion, the superior numbers of Greeks and Barbarians to whom they were opposed; but their Argive auxiliaries were repulsed by the gallant citizens of Miletus; so that in both parts of the engagement, the Ionic race, commonly deemed the less warlike, prevailed over their Dorian rivals and enemies. Elated with the joy of victory, the Athenians prepared to assault the town, when they were alarmed by the approach of a fleet of fifty-five sail, which advanced in two divisions, the one commanded by the celebrated Hermocrates, the other by Theramenes the Spartan. Phrynichus prudently considered that his own strength only amounted to forty-eight galleys, and refused to commit the last hope of the republic to the danger of an unequal combat. His firmness despised the clamours of the Athenian sailors, who insulted,* under the name of cowardice, the caution of their admiral; and he calmly retired with his whole force to the isle of Samos, where the popular faction having lately treated the nobles with shocking injustice and cruelty, too frequent in Grecian democracies, were ready to receive with open arms the patrons of that fierce and licentious form of government.

The Athenian fleet retires.

The retreat of the Athenian fleet acknowledged the naval superiority of the enemy; a superiority which was alone sufficient either to acquire or to maintain the submission of the neighbouring coasts

The Athenian affairs retrieved by Alcibiades.

* Like Fabius,

"Non ponebat enim rumores ante salutem."

ENNIVS apud Cic.

which Thucydides expresses more pithily, "οὐδὲ πότε τῷ αἰσχροῖ ἐνείδης εἰς αὐτὸς ἀλογῶς διακινδυνεύσει," p. 574.

and islands. In other respects too, the Peloponnesians enjoyed the most decisive advantages. Their galleys were victualled, their soldiers were paid by Tissaphernes, and they daily expected a reinforcement of an hundred and fifty Phœnician ships, which, it was said, had already reached Aspendus, a sea port of Pamphylia. But, in this dangerous crisis, fortune seemed to respect the declining age of Athens, and, by a train of accidents, singular and almost incredible, enabled Alcibiades, so long the misfortune and the scourge, to become the defence and the saviour, of his country.

His in- During his long residence in Sparta, Alcibiades
trigues. assumed the outward gravity of deportment, and conformed himself to the spare diet, and laborious exercises, which prevailed in that austere republic; but his character and his principles remained as licentious as ever. His intrigue with Timea, the spouse of King Agis, was discovered by an excess of female levity. The Queen, vain of the attachment of so celebrated a character, familiarly gave the name of Alcibiades to her son Leotychides; a name which, first confined to the privacy of her female companions, was soon spread abroad in the world. Alcibiades punished her folly by a most mortifying but well-merited declaration, boasting that he had solicited her favours from no other motive but that he might indulge the ambitious desire of giving a king to Sparta. The offence itself, and the shameless avowal, still more provoking than the offence, excited the keenest resentment in the breast of the injured husband.* The magistrates and generals of Sparta, jealous of the fame, and envious of the merit of a stranger, readily sympathized with the misfortunes, and encouraged the revenge of Agis; and as the horrid practice of assassination still disgraced the manners of Greece, orders were sent to Astyochus, who commanded in chief the Peloponnesian forces in Asia, secretly to destroy Alcibiades, whose power defied those laws which in every Grecian republic condemned adulterers to death.† But the active and subtle Athe-

* Plutarch, ii. 49. in Alcibiad.

† Lysias in defence of Euphiletus, &c. p. 419.

nian had secured too faithful domestic intelligence in the principal families of Sparta to become the victim of this execrable design. With his usual address he eluded all the snares of Astyochus; his safety, however, required perpetual vigilance and caution, and he determined to escape from a situation, which subjected him to such irksome constraint.

Publicly banished from Athens, secretly persecuted by Sparta, he had recourse to the friendship of Tissaphernes, who admired his accomplishments, and respected his abilities, which, though far superior in degree, were similar in kind to his own. Tissaphernes was of a temper the more readily to serve a friend, in proportion as he less needed his services. Alcibiades, therefore, carefully concealed from him the dangerous resentment of the Spartans. In the selfish breast of the Persian no attachment could be durable unless founded on interest; and Alcibiades, who had deeply studied his character, began to flatter his avarice, that he might ensure his protection. He informed him, that by allowing the Peloponnesian sailors a drachma, or seven-pence sterling, of daily pay, he treated them with an useless and even dangerous liberality: that the pay given by the Athenians, even in the most flourishing times, amounted only to three oboli; which proceeded not from a disinclination to reward the skill and valour of their seamen, but from an experience, that if they received more than half a drachma each day, the superfluity would be squandered in such profligate pleasures as enfeebled and corrupted their minds and bodies, and rendered them equally incapable of exertion and of discipline. Should the sailors prove dissatisfied with this equitable reduction, the Grecian character afforded an easy expedient for silencing their licentious clamours. It would be sufficient to bribe the naval commanders and a few mercenary orators, and the careless and improvident seamen would submit, without suspicion, the rate of their pay, as well as every other concern, to the influence and authority of those who were accustomed to govern them.*

His conference with Tissaphernes.

* Thucydid. p. 584, & seqq.

Persuades
him to di-
minish his
subsidies
to the Pelo-
ponnesians.

Tissaphernes heard this advice with the attention of an avaricious man to every proposal for saving his money; and so true a judgment had Alcibiades formed of the Greeks, that Hermocrates the Syracusan was the only officer who disdained meanly and perfidiously, to betray the interest of the men under his command; yet, through the influence, of his colleagues, the plan of economy was universally adopted, and on a future occasion, Tissaphernes boasted that Hermocrates, though more coy, was not less corruptible than others, and that the only reason for which he undertook the patronage of the sailors, was to compel a reluctant compliance with his own exorbitant demands. This reproach illustrates the opinion entertained by foreign nations of Grecian virtue; but it is probably an aspersion on the fame of the illustrious Syracusan.

Alienates
him from
the interest
of Sparta.

The intrigues of Alcibiades had sown jealousy and distrust in the Peloponnesian fleet; they had alienated the minds of the troops both from Tissaphernes and their commanders: the Persian was ready to forsake those whom he had learned to despise; and Alcibiades profited of this disposition to insinuate that the alliance of the Lacedæmonians was equally expensive and inconvenient for the Great King and his lieutenants. "That these haughty republics were accustomed to take arms to defend the liberties of Greece, a design totally inconsistent with the views of the Persian court. If the Asiatic Greeks and islanders aspired at independence, and hoped to deliver themselves from Athenian governors and garrisons, without submitting to pay tribute to Persia, they ought to carry on the war at their own expense, since they would alone reap the benefit of its success. But, if Tissaphernes purposed to recover the ancient possessions of his master, he must beware of giving a decided superiority to either party, especially to the warlike Spartans. By an attention to preserve the balance even, between the hostile republics, he would force them to exhaust each other. Amidst their domestic contests an opportunity

would soon arrive, when Darius, without danger or expense, might crush both, and vindicate his just hereditary claim to the dominion of all Asia."

These artful representations produced almost an open breach between Tissaphernes and his confederates. The advantage, which Athens would derive from this rupture, might have paved the way for Alcibiades to return to his country: but he dreaded to encounter that popular fury, whose effects he had fatally experienced, and whose mad resentment no degree of merit could appease; he therefore applied secretly to Pisander, Theramenes, and other persons of distinction in the Athenian camp. To them he deplored the desperate state of public affairs, expatiated on his own credit with Tissaphernes, and insinuated that it might be yet possible to prevent the Phœnician fleet at Aspendus from sailing to assist the enemy. Assuming gradually more boldness, as he perceived the success of his intrigues, he finally declared that the Athenians might obtain not merely the neutrality, but perhaps the assistance of Artaxerxes, should they consent to abolish their turbulent democracy, so odious to the Persians, and intrust the administration of government to men worthy to negotiate with so mighty a monarch.

Alcibiades, in order to pave the way for his return to Athens, conspires against the democracy.

When the illustrious exile proposed this measure, it is uncertain whether he was acquainted with the secret cabals which had been already formed, both in the city and in the camp, for executing the design which he suggested. The misfortunes, occasioned by the giddy insolence of the multitude, had thrown the principal authority into the hands of the noble and wealthy, who corrupted by the sweets of temporary power, were desirous of rendering it perpetual. Many prompted by ambition, several moved by inconstancy, a few directed by a just sense of the incurable defects of democracy, were prepared to encounter every danger that they might overturn the established constitution. In the third and most honourable class was Antiphon, a man of an exalted character, and endowed with

A similar design both in the city and in the camp.

extraordinary talents. The irresistible energy of his eloquence was suspected by the people. He appeared not in the courts of justice, or in the assembly; but his artful and elaborate compositions often saved the lives of his friends. *He* was the invisible agent who governed all the motions of the conspiracy; and when compelled, after the ruin of his party, to stand trial for his life, he discovered powers of mind that astonished the most discerning of his contemporaries.* Pisander, Theramenes, and the other leaders of the aristocratical party, warmly approved the views of Alcibiades. The Athenian soldiers likewise, though they detested the impiety, admired the valour, of the illustrious exile, and longed to see him restored to the service of his country. All ranks lamented the dangerous situation of Athens; many thought that their affairs must become desperate, should Tissaphernes command the Phœnician fleet to co-operate with that of Peloponnesus; and many rejoiced in the prospect of a Persian alliance, in consequence of which they would enter at once into the pay of that wealthy satrap.†

Phrynichus
counter-
plots Alci-
biades.

One man, the personal enemy of Alcibiades, alone opposed the general current. But this man was Phrynichus, whose prudent firmness as a commander we have already had occasion to remark.

* Thucyd. i. viii. p. 600. A few lines above, Thucydides describes the character of Antiphon with expressive energy: *αὐτὸς Ἀθηναίων τῶν κατ' αὐτοῦ ἀρετῇ τε οὐδενὸς ὑπερὸς, καὶ κρατίστος ἐνθυμηθῆναι γένομενος, καὶ ἀ' ἡρώη, εἰπεῖν.* "An Athenian, in virtue second to no man then living, endowed with the greatest vigour of thought, and the greatest power of expression." Plutarch, in the very inaccurate and imperfect work, entitled, *The Lives of the Ten Orators*, tells us, that Antiphon was the first who wrote institutions of oratory; and that his pleadings were the most ancient that had come down to posterity. Among the fifteen speeches ascribed to him, I think there are three that do not invalidate the high commendation of Thucydides.

† What influence this consideration must have had, may be conjectured from the information of Andocides, *Orat. iii.* who says, that in the course of this war the Spartans received, from their Persian allies, subsidies to the amount of five thousand talents, about a million sterling. This sum is prodigious, considering the value of money in that age.

The courage with which he encountered dangers many have equalled, but none ever surpassed the boldness with which he extricated himself from difficulties. When he perceived that his colleagues were deaf to every objection against recalling the friend of Tissaphernes, he secretly informed the Spartan admiral, Astyochus, of the intrigues which were carrying on to the disadvantage of his country. Daring as this treachery was, Phrynichus addressed a traitor not less perfidious than himself. Astyochus was become the pensioner and creature of Tissaphernes, to whom he communicated the intelligence. The Persian again communicated it to his favourite Alcibiades, who complained in strong terms to the Athenians of the baseness and villany of Phrynichus. The latter exculpated himself with consummate address; but, as the return of Alcibiades might prove fatal to his safety, he ventured a second time, to write to Astyochus, gently reproaching him with his breach of confidence, and explaining by what means he might surprise the whole Athenian fleet at Samos; an exploit that must for ever establish his fame and fortune. Astyochus again betrayed the secret to Tissaphernes and Alcibiades; but before *their* letters could be conveyed to the Athenian camp, Phrynichus, who, by some unknown channel, was informed of this new treachery, anticipated the dangerous discovery, by apprising the Athenians of the enemy's design to surprise their fleet. They had scarcely employed the proper means to frustrate that purpose, when messengers came from Alcibiades to announce the horrid perfidy of a wretch who had basely sacrificed to private resentment the last hope of his country. But the messengers arrived too late; the prior information of Phrynichus as well as the bold and singular wickedness of his design, which no common degree of evidence was thought sufficient to prove, were sustained as arguments for his exculpation; and it was believed that Alcibiades had made use of a stratagem most infamous in itself, but not unexampled among the Greeks, for destroying a man whom he detested.*

* Thucyd. p. 587—590.

Progress of
the conspi-
racy against
the demo-
cratical go-
vernment.

The opposition of Phrynichus, though it retarded the success of Alcibiades, prevented not the measures of Pisander and his associates for abolishing the democracy. The soldiers at Samos were induced, by the reasons above mentioned, to acquiesce in the resolution of their generals. But a more difficult task remained; to deprive the people of Athens of their liberty, which, since the expulsion of the family of Pisis-tratus, they had enjoyed an hundred years. Pisander headed the deputation which was sent from the camp to the city to effect this important revolution. He acquainted the extraordinary assembly, summoned on that occasion in the theatre of Bacchus, with the measures which had been adopted by their soldiers and fellow citizens at Samos. The compact band* of conspirators warmly approved the example; but loud murmurs of discontent resounded in different quarters of that spacious theatre. Pisander asked the reason of this disapprobation. "Had his opponents any thing better to propose? If they had, let them come forward and explain the grounds of their dissent: but, above all, let them explain how they could save themselves, their families, and their country, unless they complied with the demand of Tissaphernes. The imperious voice of necessity was superior to law; and when the actual danger had ceased, they might re-establish their ancient constitution." The opponents of Pisander were unable or afraid to reply: and the assembly passed a decree, investing ten ambassadors with full powers to treat with the Persian satrap.

Negotiation
with Tissa-
phernes.
Olymp.
xcii. 1.
A. C. 412.

Soon after the arrival of the Peloponnesian fleet on the coast of Asia, the Spartan commanders had concluded, in the name of their republic, a treaty with Tissaphernes; in which it was stipulated, that the subsidies should be regularly paid by the

* Or rather bands, according to Thucydides. Pisander was at pains to gain over to his views *τας ξυνωμοσίας, ἅσπερ ἐτύγχανον προτερον ἐν τῇ πόλει οὐσαι ἐπὶ δικαίαις καὶ ἀρχαίαις*. "The factions or junctos already formed in Athens, with a view to thrust themselves into the seats of judicature and the great offices of state." Thucyd. p. 592.

king of Persia, and that the Peloponnesian forces should employ their utmost endeavours to recover, for that monarch, the dominions of his ancestors, which had been long unjustly usurped and cruelly insulted, by the Athenians. This treaty seemed so honourable to the Great King, that his lieutenant could not venture openly to infringe it. It is possible, that, in the interval between his intrigues with Alcibiades, and the arrival of the Athenian ambassadors at Magnesia, the place of his usual residence, Tissaphernes might receive fresh instructions from his court to make good his agreement with the Spartans. Perhaps the crafty satrap never entertained any serious thoughts of an alliance with the Athenians, although he sufficiently relished the advice given him by Alcibiades to weaken both parties. But whatever motive determined him, it is certain that he showed a disinclination to enter into any negotiation with the Athenian ambassadors. Alarmed at the decay of his influence with the Persians, on which he had built the flattering hopes of returning to his country, Alcibiades employed all the resources of his genius, to conceal his disgrace. By solicitations, entreaties, and the meanest compliances, he obtained an audience for his fellow-citizens. As the agent of Tissaphernes, he then proposed the conditions on which they might obtain the friendship of the Great King. Several demands were made, demands most disgraceful to the name of Athens; to all of which the ambassadors submitted. They even agreed to surrender the whole coast of Ionia to its ancient sovereign. But when the artful Athenian (fearful lest they should, on any terms, accept the treaty which Tissaphernes was resolved on no terms to grant) demanded that the Persian fleets should be allowed to sail undisturbed in the Grecian seas, the ambassadors, well knowing that should this condition be complied with, no compact could hinder Greece from becoming a province of Persia, expressed their indignation in very unguarded language, and left the assembly in disgust. This imprudence enabled Alcibiades to affirm, with some appearance of truth, that their own anger and obstinacy, not the reluctance of

Artifices of
Alcibiades.

Tissaphernes, had obstructed the negociation; which was precisely the result and issue most favourable to his views.*

His artifices succeeded, but were not attended with the consequences expected from them. The Athenians, both in the camp and city, perceived, by this transaction, that his credit with the Persians was less than he represented it; and the aristocratical faction were glad to get rid of a man, whose restless ambition rendered him a dangerous associate. They persisted however, with great activity in executing their purpose; of which Phrynichus, who had opposed them only from hatred of Alcibiades, became an active abettor. When persuasion was ineffectual, they had recourse to violence. Androcles, Hyperbolus,† and other licentious demagogues, were assassinated. The people of Athens, ignorant of the strength of the conspirators, and surprised to find in the number many whom they least suspected, were restrained by inactive timidity, or fluctuated in doubtful suspense. The cabal alone acted with union and with vigour; and difficult as it seemed to subvert the Athenian democracy, which had subsisted an hundred years with unexampled glory, yet this design was undertaken and accomplished by the enterprising activity of Pisander, the artful eloquence of Theramenes, the firm intrepidity of Phrynichus, and the superintending wisdom of Antiphon.‡

Government of the . . . He it was who formed the plan, and regulated the mode of attack, which was carried on by his

* Thucyd. l. viii. p. 593.

† Thucydides paints his character in few words: "Ἵπερβόλον τι τινα Ἀθηναίω, μοχθηρὸν ἄνθρωπον ὡςρακισμένον οὐ διὰ δυνάμεως καὶ ἀξιώματος φόβον, ἀλλὰ διὰ πονηρίαν καὶ ἀσχύνην τῆς πόλεως. "One Hyperbolus, a worthless fellow, and banished by the Ostracism, not from fear of his power and dignity, but on account of his extreme profligacy, and his being a disgrace to the city." The Ostracism was thought to be for ever disgraced by being applied to such an unworthy object, and thenceforth laid aside. See Plut. in Nicia, and Aristoph. in Pac. ver. 680.

‡ Thucyd. ibid. & Lysias advers. Agorat.

associates. In a deliberation concerning the means of retrieving the affairs of the public, Pisander proposed the election of ten men, who should be charged with the important trust of preparing and digesting resolutions, to be on an appointed day laid before the assembly of the people. When the day arrived, the commissioners had but one resolution to propose: "That every citizen should be free to offer his opinion, however contrary to law, without fear of impeachment or trial;" a matter essential to the interests of the cabal, since by a strange contradiction in government, the Athenian orators and statesmen were liable to prosecution* before the ordinary courts of justice, for such speeches and decrees as had been approved and confirmed by the assembly. In consequence of this act of indemnity, Pisander and his party boldly declared that neither the spirit nor the forms of the established constitution (which had recently subjected them to such a weight of misfortunes) suited the present dangerous and alarming crisis. That it was necessary to new model the whole fabric of government; for which purpose five persons (whose names he read) ought to be appointed by the people, to choose an hundred others; each of whom should select three associates; and the four hundred thus chosen, men of dignity and opulence, who would serve their country without fee or reward, ought immediately to be invested with the majesty of the republic. They alone should conduct the administration uncontrolled, and assemble, as often as seemed proper, five thousand citizens, whom they judged most worthy of being consulted in the management of public affairs. This extraordinary proposal was accepted without opposition: the partisans of democracy dreaded the strength of the cabal; and, the undiscerning multitude, dazzled by the imposing name of five thousand, a number far exceeding the ordinary assemblies of Athens, perceived not that they surrendered their liberties to the artifice of an ambitious faction.†

* By the γραφή παρανομων. See Vol. I. Chap. xiii.

† Thucyd. & Lysias, ubi supra.

Their tyranny renders them odious.

But the conduct of the four hundred tyrants (for historians have justly adopted the language of Athenian resentment) soon opened the eyes and understanding of the most thoughtless. They abolished every vestige of ancient freedom; employed mercenary troops levied from the small islands of the Ægean, to overawe the multitude, to intimidate, and in some instances to destroy, their real or suspected enemies. Instead of seizing the opportunity of annoying the Peloponnesians, enraged at the treachery of Tissaphernes, and mutinous for want of pay and subsistence, they sent ambassadors to solicit peace from the Spartans on the most dishonourable terms. Their tyranny rendered them odious in the city, and their cowardice made them contemptible in the camp at Samos. Their cruelty and injustice were described, and exaggerated, by the fugitives who continually arrived in that island. The generous youth, employed in the sea and land service, were impatient of the indignities offered to their fellow-citizens. The same indignities might be inflicted on themselves, if they did not vindicate their freedom. These secret murmurs broke out into loud and licentious clamours, which were encouraged by the approbation of the Samians. Thrasybulus and Thrasyllus, two officers of high merit and distinction, though not actually intrusted with a share in the supreme command,* gave activity and boldness to the insurgents. The abettors of the new government were attacked by surprise; thirty of the most criminal were put to death, several others were banished, democracy was re-established in the camp, and the soldiers were bound by oath to maintain their hereditary government against the conspiracy of domestic foes, and to act with vigour and unanimity against the public enemy.

Their partisans at Samos destroyed by Thrasybulus and Thrasyllus.

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* Neither generals nor admirals: for Thrasybulus only commanded a galley; and Thrasyllus served in the heavy armed infantry, whether as an officer, or in the ranks, the expression leaves uncertain. The scholiast, however, considers *οὐκ ἐπὶ πλοίων* as synonymous with *τοῦ ὀπλίσκου ἀρχόντι*. Thucyd. p. 604.

Thrasybulus, who headed this successful and meritorious sedition, had a mind to conceive, a tongue to persuade, and a hand to execute, the most daring designs. He exhorted the soldiers, not to despair of effecting in the capital the same revolution which they had produced in the camp. But should they fail in that design, they ought no longer to obey a city which had neither wealth nor wisdom, neither supplies nor good counsel to send them. They were themselves more numerous than the subjects of the four hundred, and better provided with all things necessary for war. They possessed an island which had formerly contended with Athens for the command of the sea, and which, it was hoped, they might defend against every foe, foreign and domestic. But were they compelled to forsake it, they had still reason to expect that, with an hundred ships of war, and with so many brave men, they might acquire an establishment not less valuable elsewhere, in which they would enjoy, undisturbed, the invaluable gifts of liberty. Their most immediate concern was to recall Alcibiades, who had been deceived and disgraced by the tyrants, and who not only felt with peculiar sensibility, but could resent with becoming dignity, the wrongs of his country and his own. The advice of Thrasybulus was approved; soon after he sailed to Magnesia, and returned in company with Alcibiades.

The former conducts Alcibiades to the Athenian camp.

Nearly four years had elapsed since the eloquent son of Clinias had spoken in an Athenian assembly. Being presented by Thrasybulus to his fellow-citizens, he began by accusing his fortune, and lamenting his calamities. "Yet his banishment ought not to affect him with permanent sorrow, since it had furnished him with an opportunity to serve the cause of his country. This event, otherwise unfortunate, had procured him the acquaintance and friendship of Tissaphernes; who, moved by his entreaties, had withheld the stipulated pay from the Peloponnesian forces, and who, he doubted not, would continue his good offices to the Athenians, supply them with

He addresses his countrymen.

every thing requisite for maintaining the war, and even summon the Phœnician fleet to their assistance." These were magnificent but flattering promises. In making them, Alcibiades however did not consult merely the dictates of vanity. They raised his credit with the army, who immediately saluted him general;* they widened the breach between Tissaphernes and the Spartans; and they struck terror (when his speech got abroad) into the tyrants of Athens, who had provoked the resentment of a man qualified to subvert their usurpation.

His message
to the ty-
rants.

Alcibiades left the care of the troops to his colleagues Thrasybulus and Thrasyllus, and withdrew himself from the applauses of his admiring countrymen, on pretence of concerting with Tissaphernes the system of their future operations. But his principal motive was to show himself to the Persian, in the new and illustrious character with which he was invested; for having raised his authority among the Athenians by his influence with the satrap, he expected to strengthen this influence by the support of that authority. Before he returned to the camp, ambassadors had been sent by the tyrants, to attempt a negotiation with the partisans of democracy, who, inflamed by continual reports of the indignities and cruelties committed in Athens, prepared to sail thither to protect their friends and take vengeance on their enemies. Alcibiades judiciously opposed this rash resolution, which must have left the Hellespont, Ionia, and the islands, at the mercy of the hostile fleet. But he commanded the ambassadors to deliver to their masters a short but pithy message: "That they must divest themselves of their illegal power, and restore the ancient constitution. If they delayed obedience, he would sail to the Piræus, and deprive them of their authority and their lives."†

* *Μετὰ τῶν στρατῶν*—They associated him with the former commanders. But Thucydides immediately adds, *καὶ τὰ πρῶτα πάντα ἀνέβλεπον*, and referred every thing to his management, p. 609.

† Thucyd. *ibid.* & Plut. ii. 54. in Vit. Alcibiad.

When this message was reported at Athens, it added to the disorder and confusion in which that unhappy city was involved. The four hundred who had acted with unanimity in usurping the government, soon disagreed about the administration, and split into factions, which persecuted each other as furiously as both had persecuted the people.* Theramenes and Aristocrates condemned and opposed the tyrannical measures of their colleagues. The perfidious Phrynichus was slain; both parties prepared for taking arms; and the horrors of a Corcyrean sedition were ready to be renewed in Athens, when the old men, the children, the women and strangers, interposed for the safety of a city which had long been the ornament of Greece, the terror of Persia, and the admiration of the world.†

Tumults in Athens.

Had the public enemy availed themselves of this opportunity to assault the Piræus, Athens could not have been saved from immediate destruction. But the Peloponnesian forces at Miletus, long clamorous and discontented, had broken out into open mutiny, when they heard of the recall of Alcibiades, and the hostile designs of Tissaphernes. To the duplicity of the satrap, and the treachery of their own captains, they justly ascribed the want of pay and subsistence, and all the misfortunes which they felt or dreaded. Their resentment was violent and implacable. They destroyed the Persian fortifications in the neighbourhood of Miletus; they put the garrisons to the sword; their treacherous commander, Astyochus, saved his life by flying to an altar; nor was the tumult appeased until the guilty were removed from their sight, and Myndarus, an officer, of approved valour and fidelity, arrived from Sparta to assume the principal command.‡

Mutiny in the Peloponnesian camp.

The dreadful consequences which must have resulted to the Athenians, if, during the fury of their sedition, the enemy had attacked them with a fleet

Amidst the tumults in Athens, the Pelopon-

* Lysias adv. Agorat.

† Thucyd. p. 610.

‡ Thucyd. p. 611.

nesian fleet
appears on
the coast.

of an hundred and fifty sail, may be conceived by the terror inspired by a much smaller Peloponnesian squadron of only forty-two vessels, commanded by the Spartan Hegesandridas. The friends of the constitution had assembled in the spacious theatre of Bacchus. Messengers passed between them and the partisans of Antiphon and Pisander, who had convened in a distant quarter of the city. The most important matters were in agitation, when the alarm was given that some Peloponnesian ships had been seen on the coast. Both assemblies were immediately dissolved. All ranks of men hastened to the Piræus; manned the vessels in the harbour; launched others; and prepared thirty-six for taking the sea. When Hegesandridas perceived the ardent opposition which he must encounter in attempting to land, he doubled the promontory of Sunium, and sailed towards the fertile island of Eubœa, from which, since the fortification of Decelia, the Athenians had derived far more plentiful supplies than from the desolated territory of Attica. To defend a country which formed their principal resource, they sailed in pursuit of the enemy, and observed them next day near the shore of Eretria, the most considerable town in the island.

Battle of
Eretria.

The Eubœans, who had long watched an opportunity to revolt, supplied the Peloponnesian squadron with all necessaries in abundance; but instead of furnishing a market to the Athenians, they retired from the coast on their approach. The commanders were obliged to diminish their strength, by detaching several parties into the country to procure provisions; Hegesandridas seized this moment to attack them: most of the ships were taken; the crews swam to land; many were cruelly murdered by the Eretrians, from whom they expected protection; and such only survived as took refuge in the Athenian garrisons scattered over the island.*

* Thucyd. p. 622.

The news of this misfortune were most alarming to the Athenians. Neither the invasion of Xerxes, nor even the defeat in Sicily, occasioned such terrible consternation. They dreaded the immediate defection of Eubœa; they had not any more ships to launch; no new means of resisting their multiplied enemies: the city was divided against the camp, and divided against itself. Yet the magnanimous firmness of Theramenes did not allow the friends of liberty to despair. He encouraged them to disburden the republic of its domestic foes, who had summoned, or who were at least believed to have summoned, the assistance of the Lacedæmonian fleet, that they might be enabled to enslave their fellow-citizens. Antiphon, Pisander, and others most obnoxious, seasonably escaped; the rest submitted. A decree was passed, recalling Alcibiades, and approving the conduct of the troops at Samos. The sedition ceased. The democracy, which had been interrupted four months was restored; and such are the resources of a free government, that even this violent fermentation was not unproductive of benefit to the state. The Athenians completed whatever had been left imperfect in former reformation;* and determined to defend, to the last extremity, the ancient glory of the republic.

Democracy
re-esta-
blished in
Athens.
Olymp.
xcii. 2.
A. C. 411.

By the imprudent or perfidious conduct of their commanders, and the seditious spirit of their troops, the Peloponnesians lost a seasonable opportunity to terminate the war with equal advantage and honour, and having neglected the prosperous current of their fortune, they were compelled long and

The Athe-
nians vic-
torious at
sea.
Olymp.
xcii. 2.
A. C. 411.

* The government was brought back to its original principles, as established by Solon. Among other salutary regulations, it was enacted that no one should receive a salary for any public magistracy. "And now," says Thucydides, "for the first time, in the present age at least, the Athenians modelled their government aright: and this enabled Athens again to raise her head." Thucyd. p. 623. It is remarkable, that neither Diodorus, Plutarch, nor any of the orators, make the least mention of those salutary regulations, which indeed lasted not long after the return of Alcibiades.

laboriously to strive against an unfavourable stream. The doubtful Tissaphernes hesitated between the part of an open enemy, or a treacherous ally; the Spartans, who had formerly rejected the friendship, now courted the protection, of his rival Pharnabazus; to whose northern province they sailed with the principal strength of their armament, leaving only a small squadron at Miletus, to defend their southern acquisitions. The Athenians, animated by the manly counsels of Thrasybulus and Thrasyllus, the generous defenders of their freedom, proceeded northwards in pursuit of the enemy; and the important straits, which join the Euxine and Ægæan seas, became, and long continued, the scene of conflict. In the twenty-first winter of the war, a year already distinguished by the dissolution and revival of their democracy, the Athenians prevailed in three successive engagements, the event of which became continually more decisive. In the first, which was fought in the narrow channel between Sestos and Abydos, the advantages were in some measure balanced, since Thrasybulus took twenty Peloponnesian ships, with the loss of fifteen of his own. But the glory remained entire to the Athenians, who repelled the enemy, and offered to renew the battle.* Not long afterwards, they intercepted a squadron of fourteen Rhodian vessels, near Cape Rhegium. The islanders defended themselves with their usual bravery. Myndarus beheld the engagement from the distance of eight miles, while he performed his morning devotions to Minerva in the lofty temple of Ilium. Alarmed for the safety of his friends, he rushed from that sacred edifice, and hastened with great diligence to the shore, that he might launch his ships, and prevent, by speedy assistance, the capture or destruction of the Rhodians.† The principal Athenian squadron attacked him near the shore of Abydos. The engagement was fought from morning till night, and still continued doubtful, when the arrival of eighteen galleys, commanded by Alcibiades, turned the scale of victory.

* Thucyd. i. viii. p. 626.

† Xenoph. Hellen. i. i. c. i. Diodor. xiii. p. 354.

The escape of the Peloponnesians was favoured by the bravery of Pharnabazus, who, at the head of his Barbarian troops, had been an impatient spectator of the combat. He gallantly rode into the sea, encouraging his men with his voice, his arm, and his example. The Spartan admiral drew up the greatest part of his fleet along the shore, and prepared to resist the assailants; but the Athenians, satisfied with the advantages already obtained, sailed to Sestos, carrying with them a valuable prize, thirty Peloponnesian galleys, as well as fifteen of their own, which they had lost in the former engagement. Thrasyllus was sent to Athens, that he might communicate the good news, and raise such supplies of men and money as could be expected from that exhausted city.*

The Spartans yielded possession of the sea, which they hoped soon to recover, and retired to the friendly harbours of Cyzicus, to repair their shattered fleet; while the Athenians profited of the fame of their victory and the terror of their arms, to demand contributions from the numerous and wealthy towns in that neighbourhood. The several divisions returned to Sestos, having met with very indifferent success in their design; nor, without obtaining more decisive and important advantages, could they expect to intimidate such strongly fortified places as Byzantium, Selembria, Perinthus, on the European, or Lampsacus, Parium, Chalcedon, on the Asiatic coast. It was determined therefore, chiefly by the advice of Alcibiades, to attack the enemy at Cyzicus: for which purpose they sailed with eighty galleys, to the small island of Proconnesus, near the western extremity of the Propontis and ten miles distant from the station of the Peloponnesian fleet. Alcibiades surprised sixty vessels in a dark and rainy morning, as they were manœuvring at a distance from the harbour, and skilfully intercepted their retreat. As the day cleared up, the rest sailed forth to their assistance; the action became general; the Athenians obtained a complete victory,

Alcibiades
surprises,
and takes
the whole
Pelopon-
nesian fleet.

* Xenoph. Hellen. l. i. c. i. Diodor. xiii. p. 354.

and their valour was rewarded by the capture of the whole Peloponnesian fleet, except the Syracusan ships, which were burned, in the face of a victorious enemy, by the enterprising Hermocrates. The circumstances and consequences of this important action were related in few, but expressive words, to the Spartan senate, in a letter written by Hippocrates the second in command, and intercepted by the Athenians: "All is lost; our ships are taken; Myndarus is slain; the men want bread; we know not what to do."*

The Athenians diligently improve their advantages. Olymp. xcii. 3. A. C. 410.

The fatal disaster at Cyzicus prevented the Peloponnesians from obstructing, during the following year, the designs of the enemy, who took possession of that wealthy sea-port, as well as of the strong city Perinthus; raised a large contribution on Selembria; and fortified Chrysopolis, a small town of Chalcedonia, only three miles distant from Byzantium. In this new fortress they placed a considerable body of troops; and guarded the neighbouring strait with a squadron of thirty sail, commanded by Theramenes and Eubulus, and destined to exact, as tribute, a tenth from all ships which sailed through the Bosphorus into the Euxine sea.† The Peloponnesians were assisted by Pharnabazus in equipping a new fleet; but were deprived of the wise counsels of Hermocrates, whose abilities were well fitted both to prepare and to employ the resources of war. The success of the Asiatic expedition had not corresponded to the sanguine hopes of his countrymen; the insolent populace accused the incapacity of their commanders; and a mandate was sent from Syracuse, depriving them of their office, and punishing them with banishment. The conduct of Hermocrates is worthy of admi-

* Xenoph. Hellen. l. i. c. i. & Phrt. p. 60. in Alcibiad.

† It is well known, that Mahomet the Second obtained the same end, by fortifying two castles, one on the Asiatic, and another on the European side. That near to Chrysopolis is called by the modern Greeks Neocastron; but the name of the town itself is changed to Scutari; a place deemed by the Turks one of the suburbs of Constantinople.

ration. Having called an assembly, he deplored his hard fortune, but recommended the most submissive obedience to the authority of the republic. He then exhorted the sailors to name temporary commanders, till the arrival of those who had been appointed by their country. But the assembly, especially the captains and pilots, tumultuously called out, "That he and his colleagues ought to continue in the command." Hermocrates then conjured them "not to rebel against the government. When they should return home, they would then enjoy a fair opportunity to do justice to their admirals, by recounting the battles which they had won, by enumerating the ships which they had taken, and by relating how their own courage, and the conduct of their commanders, had entitled them to the most honourable place in every engagement by sea and land." At the earnest and unanimous entreaty of the assembly, he consented, however, to retain his authority till the arrival of his successors. His colleagues imitated the example; and soon after this memorable scene, Demarchus, Mysco, and Potamis, the admirals named by the state, took the command of the Syracusan forces. Yet the soldiers and sailors would not allow their beloved leaders to depart, before taking in their presence a solemn oath to revoke their unjust banishment, whenever they themselves returned to Syracuse. On Hermocrates in particular, the captains and pilots bestowed many distinguished tokens of their affection and respect; which his behaviour, indeed, had justly merited; for every morning and evening he had called them together, communicated his designs, asked their opinion and advice, reviewed the past, and concerted the future operations of the war; while his popular manners and condescending affability secured the love of those who respected his great talents, his vigilance and his courage.*

Admirable
behaviour
of Hermo-
crates the
Syracusan.

Meanwhile Thrasyllus obtained at Athens the supplies which he had gone to solicit; supplies far

Thrasyllus,
at first suc-
cessful, is

* Xenoph. p. 431.

defeated in
the battle of
Ephesus.
Olymp.
xcii. 4.
A. C. 409.

more powerful than he had reason to expect. They consisted in a thousand heavy armed men, an hundred horse, and fifty galleys, manned by five thousand experienced seamen. That the sailors might be usefully employed on every emergence at sea or land, they were provided with the small and light bucklers, the darts, swords, and javelins, appropriate to the Grecian targeteers, who uniting strength and velocity, formed an intermediate and useful order between the archers and pikemen. With these forces, Thrasyllus sailed to Samos, hoping to render the twenty-third campaign not less glorious than the preceding; and ambitious to rival, by his victories in the central and southern parts of the Asiatic coast, the fame acquired by Alcibiades and Thrasybulus in the north. His first operations were successful. He took Colophon, with several places of less note, in Ionia; penetrated into the heart of Lydia, burning the corn and villages, and returned to the shore, driving before him vast crowds of slaves and other valuable booty. His courage was increased by the want of resistance on the part of Tissaphernes, whose province he had invaded: on that of the Peloponnesian forces at Miletus; and on that of the revolted colonies of Athens. He resolved therefore to attack the beautiful and flourishing city of Ephesus, which was then the principal ornament and defence of the Ionic coast. While his soldiers, in separate divisions, were making their approaches to the walls of that place, the enemy assembled from every quarter to defend the majesty of Ephesian Diana. A vigorous sally of the townsmen animated the exertions of Tissaphernes and the Peloponnesians, the latter of whom had been seasonably reinforced by a considerable squadron from Sicily. The Athenians were defeated with the loss of three hundred men; and retiring from the field of battle, they took refuge in their ships, and prepared to sail towards the Hellespont.*

* Xenoph. Hellen. l. i. p. 434.

During the voyage thither, they fell in with twenty Sicilian galleys, of which they took four, and pursued the rest to Ephesus. Having soon afterwards reached the Hellespont, they found the Athenian armament at Lampsacus, where Alcibiades thought proper to muster the whole military and naval forces: but, on this occasion, the northern army gave a remarkable proof of pride, or spirit. They who had ever been victorious, refused to rank with the soldiers of Thrasyllus, who had been so shamefully foiled before the walls of Ephesus. They submitted, however, though not without reluctance to live in the same winter-quarters; from whence they made a conjunct expedition against Abydus. Pharnabazus defended the place with a numerous body of Persian cavalry. The disgraced troops of Thrasyllus rejoiced in an opportunity to retrieve their honour. They attacked, repelled, and routed the enemy. Their victory decided the fate of Abydus, and their courage was approved by the army of Alcibiades, who embraced them as fellow soldiers and friends.

His soldiers
regain their
honour be-
fore the
walls of
Abydus.

For several years the measures of the Athenians had been almost uniformly successful; but the twenty-fourth campaign was distinguished by peculiar favours of fortune. The invasion of Sicily by the Carthaginians prevented that island from sending any effectual assistance to their Peloponnesian allies. The dangerous revolt of the Medes withheld the Persian reinforcements, which were necessary to support the arms of Pharnabazus.* Both enemies were repeatedly defeated by the Athenians, driven from their encampments and fortresses near the shore and pursued into the inland country, which was plundered and desolated by the victors. The Athenians returned in triumph to attack the fortified cities, which still declined submission; an undertaking in which Alcibiades displayed the wonderful resources of his versatile genius. By gradual approaches, by sudden as-

Alcibiades
takes By-
zantium.
His success
by sea and
land.
Olymp.
xciii. 1.
A. C. 408.

* Diodorus, l. xiii.

saults, by surprise, by treason, or by stratagem, he in a few months became master of Chalcedon, Selembria, and at last of Byzantium itself. His naval success was equally conspicuous. The Athenians again commanded the sea. The small squadrons fitted out by the enemy successively fell into their power; and these multiplied captures which were made with little difficulty, accumulated the trophies of the well-fought battles which we have already described. It was computed by the partisans of Alcibiades, that, since assuming the command, he had taken or destroyed two hundred Syracusan and Peloponnesian galleys; and his superiority of naval force enabled him to raise such contributions, both in the Euxine and Mediterranean, as abundantly supplied his fleet and army with every necessary article of subsistence and accommodation.*

His triumphant return to Athens. Olymp. xciii. 2. A. C. 407.

While the Athenian arms were crowned with such glory abroad, the Attic territory was continually harassed by king Agis and the Lacedæmonian troops posted at Decelia. Their bold and sudden incursions frequently threatened the safety of the city itself; the desolated lands afforded no advantage to the ruined proprietors; nor could the Athenians venture without their walls, to celebrate their accustomed festivals. Alcibiades, animated by his foreign victories, hoped to relieve the domestic sufferings of his country; and after an absence of many years, distinguished by such a variety of fortune, eagerly longed to revisit his native city, and to enjoy the rewards and honours usually bestowed by the Greeks on successful valour. This celebrated voyage, which ancient historians were fond of decorating with every circumstance of naval triumph,† was performed in the twenty-fifth summer of the war. Notwithstanding all his services, the cautious son of Clinias instructed by adversity, declined to land in the Piræus, until he was informed that the assembly had repealed the decrees against him, formally revoked his banishment,

* Xenoph. Hellen. Diodor. l. xiii. Plut. in Alcibiad.

† Duris apud Plut. in Alcibiad.

and prolonged the term of his command. Even after this agreeable intelligence, he was still unable to conquer his well-founded distrust of the variable and capricious humours of the people; nor would he approach the crowded shore, till he observed, in the midst of the multitude, his principal friends and relations inviting him by their voice and action. He then landed amidst the universal acclamations of the spectators, who, unattentive to the naval pomp, and regardless of the other commanders, fixed their eyes only on Alcibiades. Next day an extraordinary assembly was summoned, by order of the magistrates, that he might explain and justify his apparent misconduct, and receive the rewards due to his acknowledged merit. The public anticipated his apology, by contrasting the melancholy situation of affairs when Alcibiades assumed the command, with the actual condition of the republic. "At the former period Athens yielded the command of the sea: the enemy were every where victorious; the state was oppressed by foreign war, torn by sedition, without resources, and without hope. The address and dexterity of Alcibiades was alone able to have disunited the councils, to have weakened and afterwards repelled the efforts of a powerful confederacy; his activity and courage could alone have animated the dejection of the citizens to pursue the measures of offensive war: his abilities, his virtue, and his fortune, could alone have rendered those measures successful."

Before judges so favourably disposed to hear him, Alcibiades found no difficulty to make his defence; but it was difficult both for him and his friends to moderate the excessive transports of the people, who would have loaded their favourite with honours incompatible with the genius of a free republic, and which might, therefore, have proved dangerous to his future safety. He received with pleasure, the crowns and garlands, with other accustomed pledges of public gratitude and admiration; but he respectfully declined the royal sceptre, expressing a firm resolution to main-

His reception there.

tain the hereditary freedom of his country.* Athens required not a king, but a general with undivided power, capable of restoring the ancient splendour of the commonwealth. To this illustrious rank, which had been filled by Themistocles and Cimon, the son of Clinias might justly aspire. He was appointed commander in chief by sea and land.† An hundred galleys were equipped, and transports were prepared for fifteen hundred heavy-armed men, with a proportional body of cavalry.

The Eleusinian mysteries.

Several months‡ had passed in these preparations, when the Eleusinian festival approached; a time destined to commemorate and to diffuse the temporal and spiritual gifts of the goddess Ceres, originally bestowed on the Athenians, and by them communicated to the rest of Greece.|| Corn, wine, and oil, were the principal productions of Attica; each of which had been introduced into that country through the propitious intervention of a divinity, whose name was distinguished by appropriated honours. Minerva, who had given not only the olive, but what was regarded as far more valuable, her peculiar protection to the city of Athens, was rewarded with innumerable solemnities. Various also were the professions of gratitude expressed, in stated days of the spring and autumn, to the generous author of the vine. The festival of Ceres returned, indeed, less frequently; but was, partly on that account, the more solemn and awful; and partly, because distinguished by the Eleusinian mysteries, those hidden treasures of wisdom and happiness, which were poured out on the initiated in the temple of Eleusis. Four-

* Com. Isocrat. Orat. pro Alcibiad. et Plut. in Alcibiad.

† *Ἀναρρηθείς ἀπαντῶν ἡμέρων ἀντοκρατωρ*. "He was chosen absolute commander of all." Xenoph. p. 440.

‡ From the festivals Plynteria and Eleusinia, mentioned in the text, it appears that he arrived in July, and sailed in November.

|| Meursius, apud Gronov. Thesaur. has collected all the passages in ancient writers respecting this festival. It is said to have been celebrated in the month Boedromion, which, according to Father Petau, answers to our November. But as the Attic year was lunar, the months of that year could not

teen* centuries before the Christian æra, the goddess, it is said, communicated those invaluable rites to Eumolpus and Keryx, two virtuous men, who had received her in the form of an unknown traveller with pious hospitality.† Their descendants, the Eumolpidæ and Keryces, continued the ministers and guardians of this memorable institution, which was finally abolished by the great Theodosius, after it had lasted eighteen hundred years.‡ The candidates for initiation were prepared by watching, abstinence, sacrifice, and prayer; and before revealing to them the divine secrets, the most awful silence was enjoined them. Yet enough transpired among the profane vulgar to enable us still to collect, from impartial|| and authentic testimony, that the mysteries of Ceres expressed by significant emblems, the immortality of the human soul, and the rewards prepared in a future life, for the virtuous servants of heaven. The secrecy enjoined by her ministers, so unworthy the truths which they taught, might justify the indifference of Socrates,§ whose doctrines, not less divine, were inculcated with unreserved freedom. But the fate of Socrates

exactly correspond to those of ours. In the computation of their months, the Greeks agreed not with other nations, nor even among themselves. Vid. Plut. in Vit. Romul. & Aristid.

* Marb. Arund. Epoch 14.

† Diodor. l. v. Isocrat. Panegy. Pollux, l. viii. c. ix.

‡ Zozim. Hist. l. iv

|| I say *impartial*, because Isocrates, the scholar of Socrates, cannot be supposed to exaggerate the merit of ceremonies, which his master declined to be made acquainted with. The passage is remarkable: "Though what I am going to relate may be disfigured by tradition and fable, the substance of it is not the less deserving of your regard. When Ceres travelled to Attica in quest of her daughter, she received the most hospitable treatment, and those particular good offices which are known to the initiated. The goddess was not ungrateful for such favours, but, in return, conferred on our ancestors the two most valuable presents which either heaven can bestow, or mankind can receive; the practice of agriculture, which delivered us from the fierce and precarious manner of life, common to us with wild animals; and the knowledge of those sacred mysteries which fortify the initiated against the terrors of death, and inspire them with the pleasing hopes of an happy immortality." See Panegy. p. 24. and Euseb. Præpar. Evang. l. iii.

§ Laert. in Diogene.

may justify, in its turn, the circumspection of the hierophants of Ceres.

Alcibiades
conducts
the Eleusi-
nian proces-
sion.

Besides the mysterious ceremonies of the temple, the worship of that bountiful goddess was celebrated by vocal and instrumental music, by public shows, and exhibitions, which continued during several days, and above all, by the pompous procession, which marched for ten miles along the sacred road leading from Athens to Eleusis.* This important part of the solemnity had formerly been intermitted, because the Athenians, after the loss of Decelia, were no longer masters of the road, and were compelled, contrary to established custom, to proceed by sea, to the temple of Ceres. Alcibiades determined to wipe off the stain of impiety which had long adhered to his character, by renewing, in all its lustre, this venerable procession. He prepared to defend, by an armed force, the peaceful ministers and votaries of the gods, believing that the Spartans would either allow them to pass undisturbed, which must lessen the military fame of that people, or if they attempted to interrupt the ceremony must be exposed not only to the dangerous resistance of men animated by enthusiasm, but to the disgraceful charge of irreligion, and the general detestation of Greece. The priests, the heralds, and the whole body of the initiated, were apprised of his intention, and requested to hold themselves in readiness by the appointed day. Early in the morning, bodies of cavalry explored the adjoining country; the eminences were occupied by the light infantry and targeteers; and, after sufficient garrisons had been left to defend the Athenian walls and fortresses, the whole mass of heavy-armed troops was drawn out to protect the Eleusinian procession, which marched along the usual road to the temple, and afterwards returned to Athens, without suffering any molestation from the Lacedæmonians; having united, on this occasion alone, all the splendour of war with the pomp of superstition.†

* Herodot. l. viii. c. lxx. & Plut. in Alcibiad.

† Plut. in Alcibiad.

Soon after this meritorious enterprise Alcibiades prepared to sail for Lesser Asia, accompanied by the affectionate admiration of his fellow-citizens, who flattered themselves that the abilities and fortune of their commander would speedily reduce

His glory clouded by the inauspicious return of the Plynteria.

Chios, Ephesus, Miletus, and the other revolted cities and islands. The general alacrity, however, was somewhat abated by the reflection, that the arrival of Alcibiades in Athens coincided with the anniversary of the Plynteria,* a day condemned to melancholy idleness, from a superstitious belief that nothing undertaken on that day could be brought to a prosperous conclusion. The celebrated Parthenon, whose remains still attest the magnificence of Pericles, was consecrated by the presence of a goddess, who realized the inspirations of Homer, as far as they were capable of being expressed by the genius of Phidias. Minerva, composed of gold and ivory, and twenty-six cubits high, was represented with the casque, the buckler, the lance, and all her usual emblems; and the warm fancy of the Athenians, enlivened and transported by the graceful majesty of her air and aspect, confounded the painful production of the statuary with the instantaneous creation of Jupiter. To confirm this useful illusion, the crafty priests of the temple carefully washed and brightened the image, whose extraordinary lustre increased the veneration of the multitude. The Plynteria, during which this ceremony was performed, required uncommon secrecy and circumspection. The eyes and imagination of the vulgar might have become too familiar with their revered goddess, had they beheld her stripped of her accustomed ornaments, and observed every part of her form brightening into new beauty under the plastic hands of the priests. To prevent this dangerous consequence, the Plynteria was veiled in mystic obscurity; the doors of the temple were shut; that sacred edifice was sur-

* Πλυνειν, to wash; πλυντήρ, πλυντήριος: and in the plural neuter, "the ceremony of ablution."

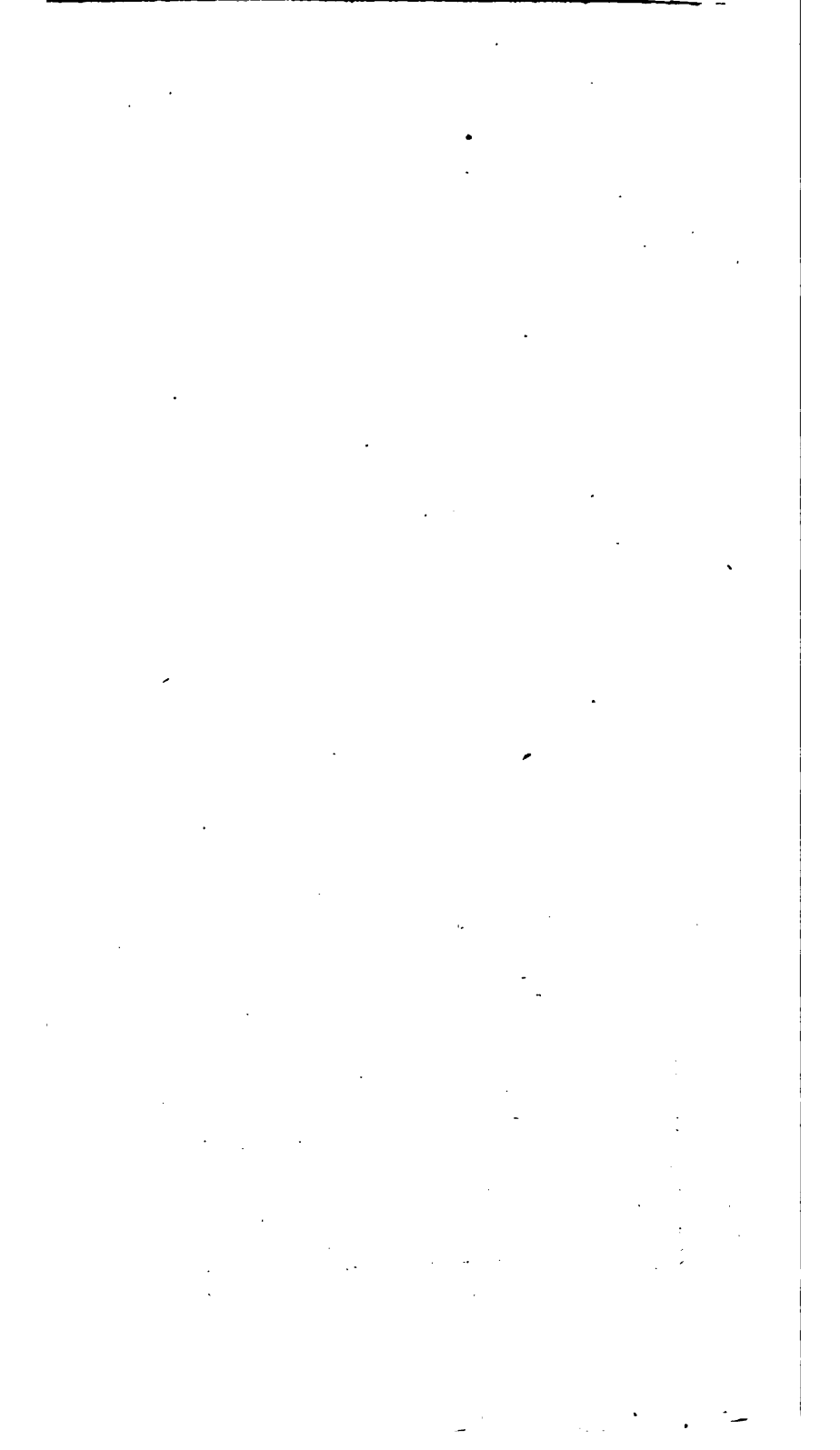
rounded on all sides to intercept the approach of indiscretion or profanity; and the return of Alcibiades, the favourite hope of his country, happening on the inauspicious day when Minerva hid her countenance, was believed by many to announce the dreadful calamities which soon afterwards befel the republic.*

* Xenoph. p. 488. & Plut. in Alcibiad.

THE END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

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